the weekly Standard

APRIL 26, 2004

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9/11 AND ALL THAT
ADAM WOLFSON

Saddam's Crimes

by Fred Barnes

Today's Challenges

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Larry Miller • A. William Samii
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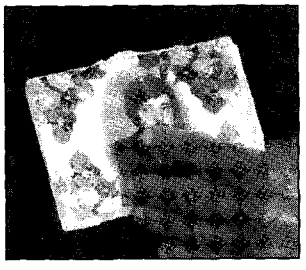

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Si Vis Pacem, Para Woodwardum

If you lead a normal life outside Washington, and happened to tune into the Bush-Blair joint press conference during your lunch hour on April 16, that first question to President Bush may have seemed a bit mysterious: "Mr. President, did you ask Secretary Rumsfeld to draw up war plans against Iraq in November 2001, just as the military action was getting under way in Afghanistan? Why couldn't Iraq wait?"

The question made sense only if you knew that the promotional machinery was being wheeled into place to sell the new book by *Washington Post* investigative eminence Bob Woodward. And the first bit of "news" from Woodward's *Plan of Attack* was that planning for the Iraq war began shortly after 9/11. If this doesn't strike you as news, if you assume that it's routine due diligence by the Pentagon to plan for wars against America's enemies, then that just shows how woefully out of touch you are with the state-of-the-art anti-Bush theories that Washington is wallowing in this election year.

That same afternoon following the press conference, the *Post* on its website gave the first authoritative peek into the book's contents, what you might call the executive summary. Under the headline "Bush Planned for War as Diplomacy Continued," the *Post*'s William Hamilton reported:

> Beginning in late December 2001, President Bush met repeatedly with Army Gen. Tommy R. Franks and his war cabinet to plan the U.S. attack on Iraq even as he and administration spokesmen insisted they were pursuing a diplomatic solution, according to a new book on the origins of the war.

Several things are noteworthy here. For starters, the idea raised in the press conference that there was overreach in the president's wanting to plan a future war as the one in Afghanistan got under way is preposterous. Iraq "couldn't wait" because (a) the then-fresh lesson of 9/11 was that the U.S. government had lacked sufficient urgency in going after its enemies; (b) war plans don't get written like a reporter's story, in a caffeine-fueled all-nighter; and (c) something known as the two-war doctrine had been official U.S. policy for a decade. It envisioned a circumstance such as prevailed after 9/11, in which the U.S. military might need to walk and chew gum at the same time. President Bush, in other words, was asking his subordinates at the Pentagon to do something that was part of their job descriptions.

The common thread in both the press conference questioning and the *Post* piece is the insinuation that something unusual and unseemly was going on in the run-up to the Iraq war. Look at that word *even* in the *Post*'s summary of Woodward. Think about the implication here. Then ask yourself whether there is adult supervision in the *Post* newsroom. Can it possibly be the received wisdom at the *Post* that it is underhanded to prepare for war while pursuing a diplomatic solution? Does it not occur to them that the two impulses are usually complementary and not contradictory? Does everyone's education now leapfrog over the classical wisdom, *si vis pacem, para bellum*—prepare for war if you want peace?

President Bush is famous for being impatient with reporters. Sometimes they really deserve it. ♦

9/11 Hypocrisy Watch

Did you notice last week that the *New York Times* suspended its institutional hostility to ethnic profiling just long enough to whack President Bush? Here's the sweet spot in the *Times*'s April 12 editorial:

> No reasonable American blames Mr. Bush for the terrorist attacks, but that's a long way from thinking there was no other conceivable action he could have taken to prevent them. He could, for instance, have left his vacation in Texas after receiving that briefing memo entitled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S." and rushed back to the White House, assembled all his top advisers and demanded to know what, in particular, was being done to screen airline passengers to make sure people who fit the airlines' threat profiles were being prevented from boarding American planes. Even that sort of prescient response would probably have been too little to head off the disaster. But those what-if questions should haunt the president as they haunt the nation. In all probability, they do and it is only the demands of his re-election campaign that are guiding Mr. Bush's public stance of utter, uncomplicated self-righteousness.

We will stipulate that the editorial page of the *New York Times* is perhaps the nation's leading authority on the subject of "utter, uncomplicated self-righteousness." But let us suppose that President Bush had left his vacation in Texas long enough to order that U.S. airlines prevent young Arab men from boarding their planes—for in everyday English that is what is meant by the bureaucratic term of art *threat profile*. Somehow we suspect that the editors of the *New York Times* would themselves have taken the next helicopter back from their own vacations in the Hamptons to scream for the president's scalp.

To be fair, no reasonable American

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can blame the *New York Times* if its knee-jerk civil libertarianism prior to 9/11 helped create an atmosphere in which it would have been unthinkable for airlines to kick off passengers fitting some prudential "threat profile" developed by the FBI.

No, what's disgraceful about the *Times*'s criticism of Bush last week is that *after* 9/11, the paper has been resistant to screening of air passengers. Here, for instance, is the *Times*'s editorial reaction on March 11, 2003, to what it called "The New Airport Profiling."

> [The Transportation Security Administration] is developing a sophisticated screening system designed to identify travelers who may pose a terrorist threat. It is a worthy goal—one ordered up by Congress—but the creation of a highly intrusive federal surveillance program raises serious privacy and due process concerns, which the government needs to address in a forthright manner.

As we said, we're willing to grant that the *New York Times* is an authority on self-righteousness. However, on the subject of what "reasonable Americans" think about the president, we can't see that the *Times* speaks with any credibility at all. ♦

A Postscript on the Clarke Book

Reporter Mike Carter of the *Seattle Times* followed up last week on another shaky claim in Richard Clarke's book. "Was it 'shaking trees' or shaking knees that led to the arrest of convicted millennium terrorist Ahmed Ressam?" Carter asked.

> As former White House counter-terrorism chief Richard Clarke tells it in his book *Against All Enemies*, an international alert to be on the lookout for terrorists played a role in Ressam's capture at a Port Angeles ferry terminal in December 1999, his car loaded with bomb-making material. . . . According to a former customs agent who was involved, Clarke's version . . . wrongly implies they were on "heightened alert" and somehow looking for terrorists.
>
> "No," was the terse reply of Michael Chapman, one of the customs agents who arrested Ressam, when asked if he was aware of a security alert.
>
> "We were on no more alert than we're always on. That is a matter of public record," said Chapman, now a Clallam County commissioner.
>
> [Chapman said] agents thought Ressam was smuggling drugs when they opened the trunk of his rental car and found bags of white powder buried in the spare-tire well. Only after finding several plastic black boxes, containing watches wired to circuit boards, did anyone suspect a bomb.
>
> [Customs Agent Diana] Dean has said repeatedly she singled Ressam out for a closer look because he was nervous, fumbling and sweating. Ressam has since told agents he was sick, and federal sources have confirmed Ressam had apparently gotten malaria while at terrorist-training camps in Afghanistan. ♦

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Casual

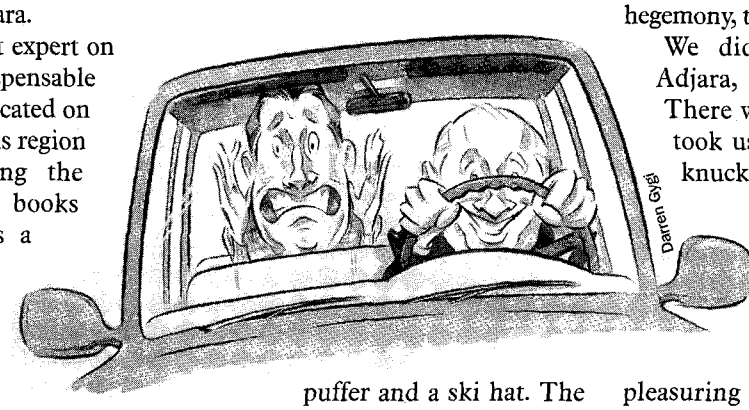
Hail, Adjara

When asked why they entered journalism, pretentious reporters will say they did so to expose injustice. But honest ones will admit that half the fun is confirming your own prejudices. One of my deepest-held is that 80 percent of the world, outside these United States, is a dreary, dysfunctional hole. In that spirit, I couldn't pass up a friend's recent invitation to observe parliamentary elections in Adjara.

I became an overnight expert on Adjara, picking up indispensable tips such as where it is located on a map (it's an autonomous region inside Georgia, abutting the Black Sea). The tour books claim Adjara once was a "Soviet playground," even though "playful Soviets" is an oxymoron on a par with "British delicacy" or "Iraqi hospitality." My delegation flew to London, where we were met by the plane of Adjaran president Aslan Abashidze, who was kind enough to send his belching YAK 42, complete with gash in the fuselage and crack in the windshield. The pilots showed off modified versions of The Barrel Roll and The Death Spiral, when one wasn't groping a stewardess who shared his jump seat.

When we landed in the dark on a pothole-filled runway, Abashidze himself was there to greet us. Five-foot-four, and a dead ringer for the actor Richard Harris, he and a fleet of men in black leather jackets holding automatic weapons gave us a warm Adjaran welcome. He's a friendly sort, but extremely security-conscious, having survived at least 14 assassination attempts, some more credible than others (after suffering a heart attack, he claimed it had been caused by a camera that emitted electromagnetic waves).

We were deposited at our "resort hotel"—a model of post-Soviet architecture and efficiency. What wasn't peeling, was crumbling. What wasn't crumbling, was broken. The elevator couldn't fit both you and your bags. The phone couldn't make long distance calls, or short distance calls, or even room-to-room. The radiators were just for show, so I slept in a down puffer and a ski hat. The tennis court had no net, the pool table no balls or cues. The "diving center" had no scuba gear, though it did have a live chicken. And the beach was fenced off, which was probably for the best, since a sunbather could get trampled by a grazing cow or, worse, need a tetanus shot from all the waste washing in from the Black Sea.



In the lobby, fierce-looking militia types in black pants, black shirts, and black leather jackets sat on leather furniture, smoking cigarettes and watching Fashion TV. "Wonder what they talk about?" pondered one journalist. "They're probably giving their friend s— for wearing gray," said another. As my wingman, Buckley Carlson, scaled the low wall of the closed bar to rescue some Georgian longnecks, the Black Jackets stirred. We promised to pay for them in the morning, but they didn't seem mollified. So I tried to defuse the situation by offering to arm-wrestle one. He obliged, and quickly drilled my arm into the ball-less pool table on three successive turns. My pride injured, I gave him a hug—a gesture universally understood as "please don't shoot us in the face."

The next day in the capital of Batumi, we had our revenge, as a group of us fell into a pick-up basketball game in a tenement slum. In the midst of all the flapping laundry and crumbling concrete, my delegation-mate Elliot Zweig missed a shot from the outside. "Sorry," he said, "the poverty got in my eyes." But we dominated the lane, clearing boards and setting bone-crushing picks. Sure, our opposition was a group of 9-year-old kids. But the sooner they learn about American hegemony, the better.

We didn't do much good in Adjara, but we made memories. There was one where Abashidze took us for a harrowing, white-knuckle ride in his Hummer. He drove, slaloming around potholes while relating how his chief political rival is a bisexual whom he has captured on videotape pleasuring himself while talking to his mistress. Then there was Election Day, when we clocked out early (it was hard to detect fraud since all the ballots were in Cyrillic), and our translator Nadia took us to her home, where all 11 members of her family lived. They fed us plum liqueur and pastries, while showing off their living room poster of Swedish super group ABBA. Her uncle came out with a boombox, and put on Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog."

Words cannot convey the sweet sadness of parachuting into people's lives, having them touch you, then having to leave. Thankfully, ABBA has expressed it better than I ever could, in their song "Another Town, Another Train": *You and I had a groovy time / But I told you somewhere down the line / You would have to find me gone / I just have to move along.*

Matt Labash

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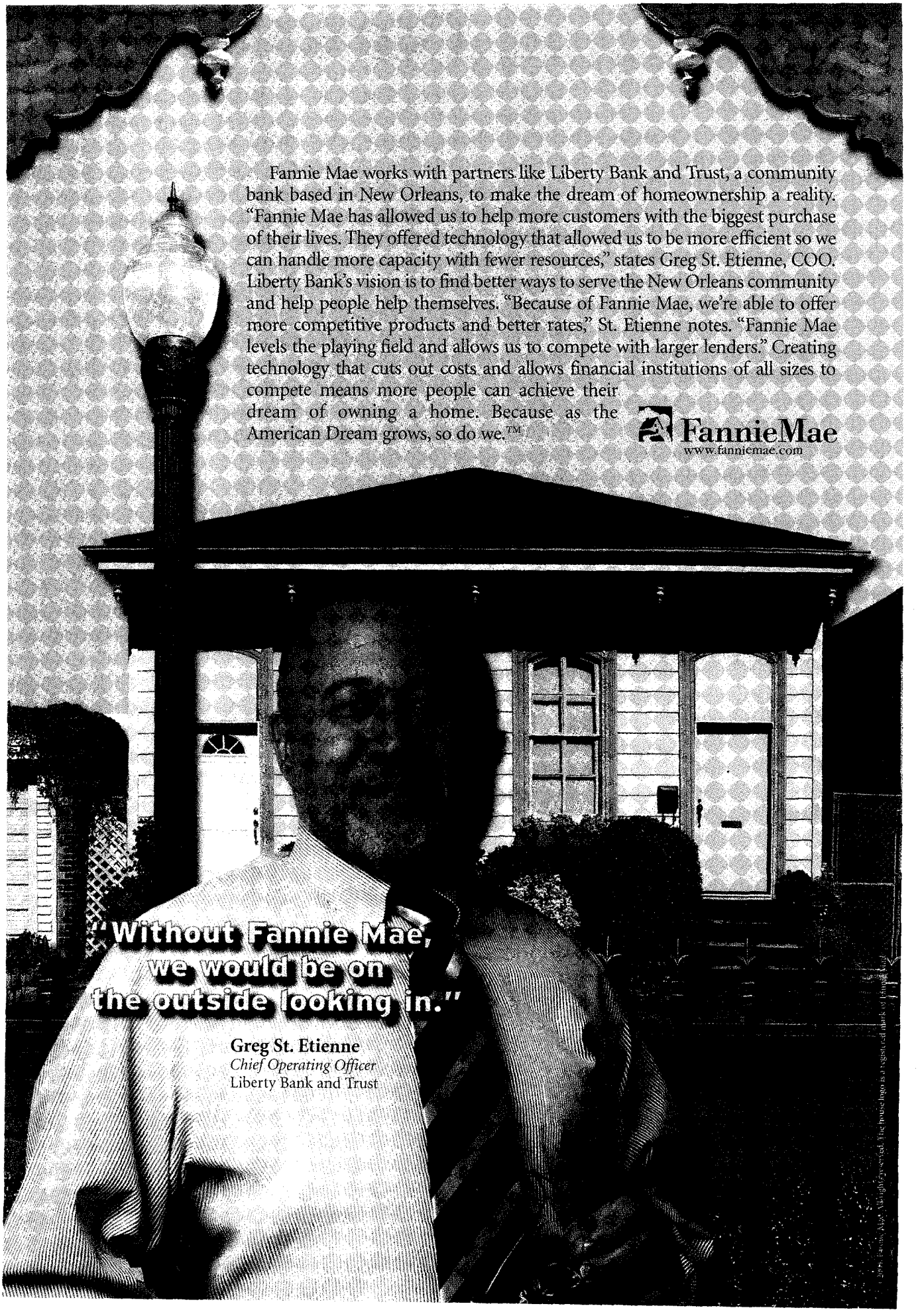

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Correspondence

Shruggery

In "The Holocaust Shrug," his article about indifference toward the liberation of Iraq, David Gelernter states, "I don't claim that Saddam resembles Hitler" (April 5). Others have stated that Saddam was "no Hitler."

How do we know that? Those of us of a certain age remember when *Hitler* was "no Hitler." I'm speaking of the thirties, when the German dictator was not considered a threat to other nations by such eminent politicians as Neville Chamberlain. It is said Henry Kissinger once remarked that if France had resisted Hitler's annexation of the Rhineland in 1936, assistant professors of history today would be arguing over whether Hitler was ever a potential danger to Europe and the world at large.

Passivity and appeasement allowed Hitler to develop into the monster we remember him as. Had those same policies of passivity and appeasement been allowed to continue in the case of Saddam Hussein and his bloody brood, can anyone rule out the possibility that Saddam or one of his sons may have one day proved to be Hitler's monstrous equal? Luckily we no longer have to face that horrible possibility.

Nancy Stone
Washington, DC

Toddball

In his review of Emmanuel Todd's book, Roger Kaplan writes that *After the Empire* is "silly, mean-spirited, and anti-Semitic bile, bigoted to a degree . . . [The book contains] fashionable clichés [and] ill-mannered condescension" ("Imperial America?" April 5).

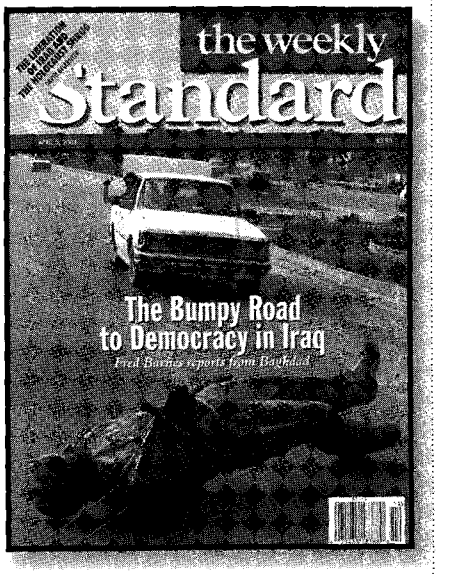
Having read the book and had the dubious honor of debating Professor Todd, I only wonder why Kaplan chose to sugarcoat.

Jeffrey Gedmin
Berlin, Germany

Rules of Engagement

Irwin M. Stelzer's "The Sleeping Giant Wakes" (March 22) describes exactly how the world should work. I have been a believer in and a forecaster of China's growth and its global significance since I began my business relationship there in the mid-1980s. As Stelzer suggests in his article, America's best policy with China should be that of forging a "strategic partnership," as China will undoubtedly reemerge as a superpower of at least equal significance to the United States. Therefore a dynamic and mutually beneficial strategic partnership between China and America has the potential to produce a century or more of relatively stable world peace and prosperity. (An early example of the fruits of such a relationship is China's engagement in the North Korean nuclear talks.)

Even troubles in the Middle East could possibly be contained by a Sino-



American global partnership, as this partnership would be made up of the two largest consumers of Middle Eastern oil.

Consumers of the magnitude of the United States and China wield a big stick in world affairs. Experience shows that the demand side usually carries the real power in a market exchange. Add to this the idea that, notwithstanding politics, both powers are technically and financially capable of moving energy consumption away from oil, and you have a source of leverage that can be used against anti-American regimes in the region.

Both philosophically and pragmatically, one of Stelzer's most important statements in his article is that "we cannot remake the world in our own image." Since China opened to the world economy, many pundits have said that China is Westernizing. But that's not the case. What China is doing is *modernizing*. Such modernization lies at the heart of a successful long-term Sino-American strategic partnership, because the fundamental differences between our societies will result in a frictional energy that will make our strategic partnership effective in global affairs.

Robert Hefner III
Oklahoma City, OK

Sinister Sisters

Three cheers for Noemie Emery's article on the politics of women's magazines ("Leftover Glamour," April 5). As a reader of these publications, as well as a conservative, I have never understood the "Women We Can't Figure Out" attitude these magazines exhibit toward such prominent and accomplished women as Condoleezza Rice.

Growing up in the 1980s, I have always extolled Margaret Thatcher as my feminine model. My mother-in-law, who also happens to be a fan of Katie Couric, once told me that "Margaret Thatcher is not really a woman"! She and the "Spin Sisters" of America's women's magazines top my list of "Women I Can't Figure Out."

Michelle Fowler
Ontario, Canada

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Too Few Troops

At his press conference Tuesday night, President Bush eloquently made the case for staying the course in Iraq. The next day, at City College in New York, Senator Kerry agreed: "It would be unwise beyond belief for the United States of America" to cut and run, and to "leave a failed Iraq in its wake." And the American people, despite the recent bad news, show no sign of panic: In a *Time*/CNN poll, 57 percent of respondents agree that the United States should "intensify" its military effort in Iraq.

Unfortunately, resolve alone won't bring success. Neither will well-delivered statements by the president. The problem in Iraq is not poor public relations, or a lack of will. Rather, it is the failure of policymakers at the highest levels to fashion a military and political strategy that maximizes the odds of success. That is what has been missing ever since Saddam's statue fell a little over a year ago.

The mere fact that violence has increased recently in Iraq is not by itself grounds for criticizing the administration's handling of the war. No sensible person believed that the effort to build a democratic Iraq would be without cost and dangers. No reasonable person expected administration officials and military commanders, either in Washington or in Baghdad, to be able to exercise unerring mastery over an inherently complex and always explosive situation.

Nor is the news from Iraq all bad. Several weeks ago we argued optimistically (perhaps too optimistically) that things were looking better, and we still believe there is much in Iraq to be gratified by: continued peaceful cooperation among Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish leaders, despite many disagreements; an economy that seems to be improving; the fact that a large majority of Iraqis, as documented in polls, say their future is promising, reject political violence, and support an ongoing American presence. And much of Iraq remains, at the moment, relatively peaceful. All this is important progress.

Yet this progress can be undone. And while we certainly do not hold the administration responsible for everything that has gone wrong in Iraq, it is clear that there have been failures in planning and in execution, failures that have been evident for most of the last year. Serious errors have been made—and made, above all, by Donald Rumsfeld's Pentagon. The recent violence in Iraq has confirmed that the level of American military forces has been too low to accomplish the president's mission ever since the invasion phase of the war ended last April.

On Thursday, the secretary of defense announced a three-month extension in tours of duty for about 20,000 troops in Iraq. This did not increase the number of troops on the ground, but it did undo a planned drawdown in military strength from 135,000 to 115,000, thereby maintaining current combat strength. But leaving 20,000 troops in Iraq for an additional three months will almost certainly not be enough. Close observers of the conflict in Iraq, civilian and military alike (military, of course, speaking off the record), say that at least two additional divisions—at least 30,000 extra troops—are needed in Iraq just to deal with the current crisis. Even more troops may well be needed to fully pacify the country. And it would be useful to have as many of those troops as possible there sooner rather than later.

The shortage of troops in Iraq is the product of a string of bad calculations and a hefty dose of wishful thinking. Above all, it is the product of Rumsfeld's fixation on high-tech military "transformation," his hostility to manpower-intensive nation-building in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, and his refusal to increase the overall size of the military in the first place. The results are plain to see: We are trying to carry out Bush's post-9/11 foreign policy with Clinton's pre-9/11 military. It is a wonderful military, but it is too small for our responsibilities in the post-9/11 world. As a result, it will not be easy to find the additional brigades to send to Iraq. Troubling reductions in our deployments elsewhere will be required, and an already stressed military will be asked to do more still. Unfortunately, there is no choice.

It didn't have to be this way. Back in August 2003, it was already clear that by early spring of 2004 there would be a shortage of forces to maintain stability and security in Iraq. Neither the military commanders in Iraq nor Rumsfeld pretended otherwise. But rather than prepare to increase American forces, Rumsfeld and General John Abizaid, the U.S. commander in the region, searched for

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stopgaps. One was the John Kerry solution: more foreign troops. Pentagon plans last fall called for the introduction of an additional international division on top of the one currently led by Poland. That second international division never materialized.

The second proposed fix was to build an Iraqi security force capable of filling the gap. Original plans to build a force of 50,000-100,000 within a year were scrapped as too modest. By October, Rumsfeld boasted that up to 200,000 Iraqi forces would be available in a matter of months. In order to accomplish this feat, training schedules were radically shortened, and procedures for vetting Iraqi soldiers and police were loosened. Critics, including this magazine, warned that this hasty assembling of an Iraqi force carried significant risks: Either they would not be capable of fighting in the time allotted, or they would be unreliable. Both unfortunately turned out to be the case. General Abizaid now acknowledges that the Iraqi forces have proved a "big disappointment." Many would not fight during the recent violence. Some even defected to the other side.

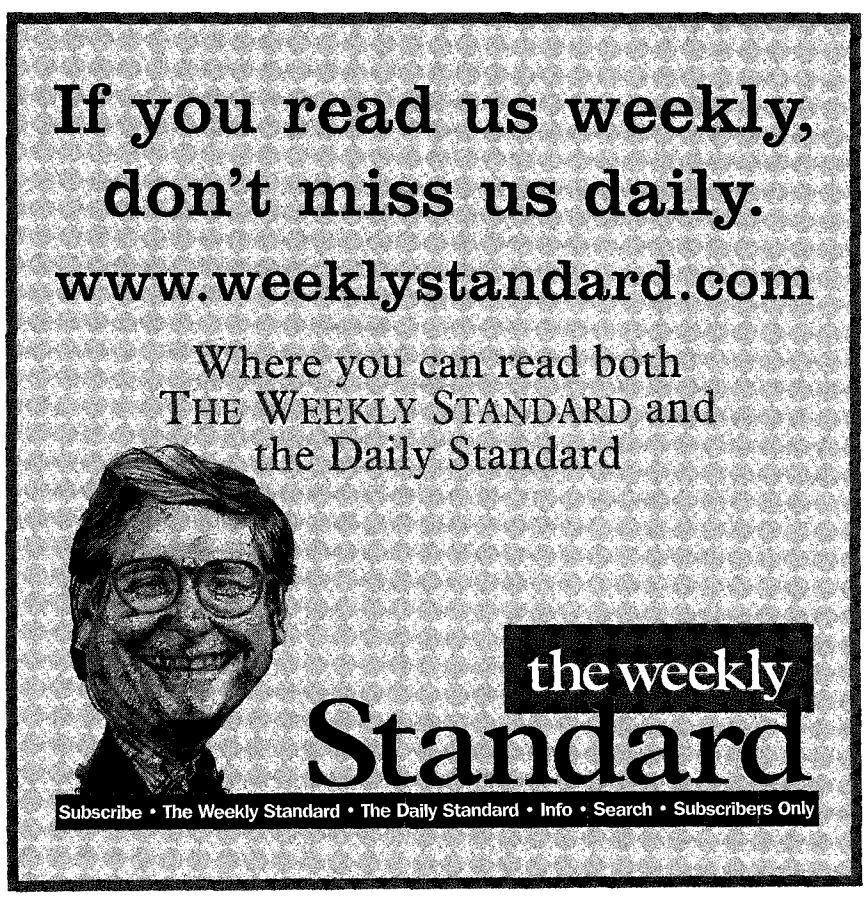
So the present shortage of troops in Iraq is not a surprise. It was predictable. Without the hoped-for second international division and without a usable force of Iraqis, security in Iraq has fallen almost entirely to an American force too small to handle the job. The stresses we're under now cannot be chalked up to the "fog of war" or simple bad luck. Last September General Ricardo Sanchez, the top commander in Iraq, was asked if he had enough troops. He responded that he would not have enough to handle a new wave of conflict in Iraq. "If a militia or an internal conflict of some nature were to erupt," he told reporters in Baghdad, ". . . that would be a challenge out there that I do not have sufficient forces for." Eight months later, that conflict erupted, and, sure enough, there weren't enough troops to handle it.

We need to fix the situation. It would of course have been better to have planned for higher force levels from the beginning, rather than to have to scramble now, calling forces back from well-earned leaves and disrupting rotations. Had the proper number of forces been in place in Iraq from the beginning, some of the recent violence might have been deterred, or suppressed more speedily. Had the proper number of forces been in place, the military would have been able to act more aggressively and thoroughly to disarm, pacify, and secure Iraq. Instead, we tried to keep a lid on things, while terrorists became better organized and militias became stronger. Had the proper number of forces been in place early on, the looting that did so much damage to Iraq's infrastructure might have been stopped, munition dumps could have been secured, economic reconstruction would have moved ahead more easily, and more men and resources could have been devoted to the training of Iraqi soldiers. Perhaps we could even have reduced infiltration from Iran, lessening Tehran's ability to stir up trouble in the south.

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld famously talks about preparing for the "unknown unknowns." Yet the present crisis was hardly unforeseeable, and Rumsfeld did not ensure that the military was prepared to deal with it. He failed to put in place in Iraq a force big enough to handle the challenges at hand. That is a significant failure, and we do not yet know the price that will be paid for it.

The question is whether Rumsfeld and his generals have learned from past mistakes. Or rather, perhaps, the question is whether George W. Bush has learned from Rumsfeld's past mistakes. After all, at the end of the day, it is up to the president to ensure that the success he demands in Iraq will in fact be accomplished. If his current secretary of defense cannot make the adjustments that are necessary, the president should find one who will.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol



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the weekly Standard

The 9/11 Commission Looks Backward

To some extent it was probably inevitable that the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States—the "9/11 Commission" lately so much in the news—would deal unfairly with those individuals and agencies who were "supposed to" defend us against the attacks in question. Modern behavioral science teaches us to expect as much.

Roughly 30 years ago, a researcher named Baruch Fischoff conducted a psychology experiment that's since become famous—as psychology experiments go—for its lessons about the risks and limitations of postmortem analysis. Fischoff divided his subjects into five groups. All were given a thumbnail history of a 1914 armed conflict between British imperial forces and Gurkha irregulars in India, along with a multiple-choice list of possible outcomes. Four of the groups were told which answer was "true," though each was assigned a different "true" answer. The fifth, a control group of volunteers, was told nothing at all about how the fighting ended. And then all five were asked to estimate how likely each suggested result had been *while the fighting was still going on*, the idea being to measure what Fischoff called "hindsight bias." If his subjects were told that "the British ultimately won," for instance, would that information alone make British victory seem to have been a surer thing all along?

The answer was yes. Hindsight bias, it turned out, was a big deal—and a big obstacle to impartial and accurate reconstruction of other people's decisions and performance. In fact, from Baruch Fischoff's Gurkha study and similar research, psychologists have since determined that impartial, and accurate, reconstruction of other people's decisions and performance is just short of impossible: Generally speaking, a "foreseeable" event is going to look *twice* as foreseeable once it's actually occurred. And there is little that even the most scrupulous after-the-fact investigator can do to immunize himself against this prejudice: Our tendency to think that what's obvious now ought also to have been obvious beforehand appears to be innate. If something bad has happened, for example, we're instinctively inclined to the view that someone—who "should have seen it coming"—failed to do his job.

So the 9/11 Commission has hindsight bias out the wazoo, and we should not be all that surprised.

But the tone and general conduct of the Commission's proceedings—setting aside the project's substantive direction for the moment—cannot be excused so easily. The Commission's public hearings—especially since former National Security Council counterterrorism coordinator Richard Clarke showed up to "apologize" to the nation, Kobe Bryant-style—have dissolved into protracted witness-grilling sessions. Each hearing begins with the reading of an extensive "staff statement" containing "preliminary" conclusions on the topic of the day. And *then*, when the network television cameras start burning, the commissioners ask their questions—of witnesses who've already been interviewed at length in private. More and more, the public questions don't even pretend to be judicious. *The CIA made a terrible mistake there, didn't it, Mr. Tenet*? Or: *What did the president know and when did he know it, Ms. Rice*?—this, about a purportedly revelatory pre-World Trade Center urgent "warning" Bush received concerning aircraft hijackings by al Qaeda.

The document at issue, incidentally, an August 6, 2001, "presidential daily briefing," has now been declassified and released. It is not revelatory; it was front-page news two years ago. And it is not an urgent warning, either, not about hijackings anyway. If anything, the memo rather minimizes the possibility: "We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting" about al Qaeda, it advises—clearly implying that this "more sensational threat reporting," hijacking being the only mentioned example, was exaggerated.

You'd like the CIA to have known better, of course. And, yes, the fact that they didn't—and that various other agencies and individuals didn't know or do what *only now* it becomes plain they could have—suggests the need for significant reform and improvement. We have previously said as much on these very pages. And while

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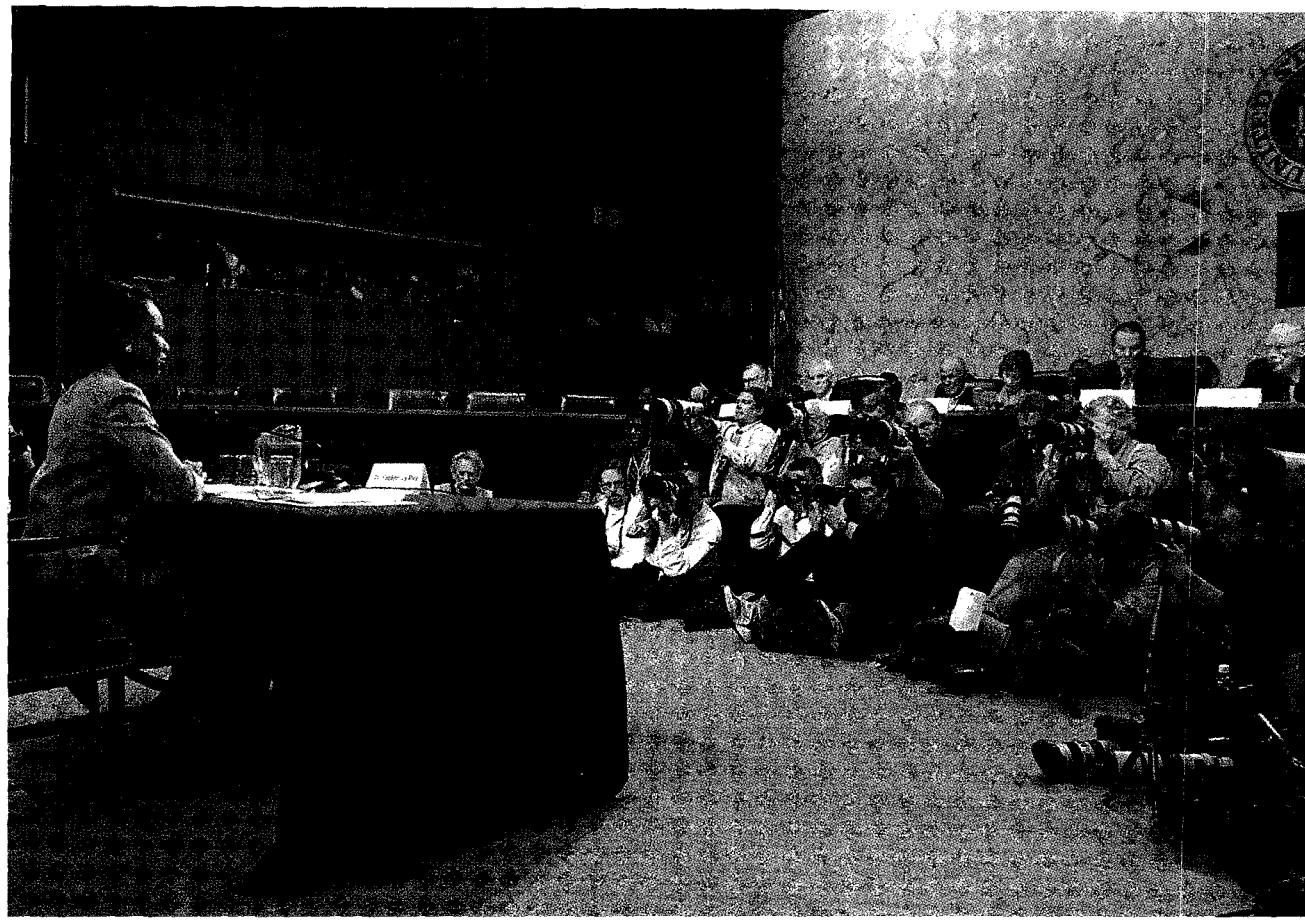

UPI / Landov / Roger L. Wollenberg

we suspect that the federal government has already begun to rearrange itself accordingly, on its own, we also suspect that many valuable policy and procedural changes remain to be made, or even so much as conceived. The government hasn't got a monopoly on wisdom where prosecuting the War on Terror is concerned; we have said that, too. Intelligent outside counsel ought never be refused. And a properly disciplined independent review commission might in certain respects have proved ideally situated to provide it.

But this is an *undisciplined* independent review commission, one that's transformed itself, to all appearances, into an elaborate and divisive fault-finding exercise, and little more. Just within the past two weeks, the Commission has invited the entire world to watch, in real time, as senior officials from two successive presidential administrations were raked over the coals for errors of judgment and omission—in the wake of a horrific crime whose key perpetrator is still at large. What's the most important thing that happened on September 11, 2001, apart from that business about 3,000 Americans getting butchered in cold blood? Washington screwed up, that's what happened. Such, at least, is the unmistakable aftertaste left by this latest round of 9/11 Commission hearings.

Former senator and current Commission member Bob Kerrey published a *New York Times* op-ed a few weeks back in which he announced, with striking confidence, that "9/11 could have been prevented." This is hindsight bias in spades—an altogether unwarranted and unreasonable judgment. And there's something vaguely indecent about it, as well. There's not a speck of extant evidence that any particular federal employee's incompetence or stupidity made possible a disaster that could otherwise have been "prevented." Why, then, are we so obsessively looking for such a culprit among a group of federal employees who by all accounts have many of them devoted entire careers—and even risked their lives—to protect the rest of us from the likes of Osama bin Laden?

In any case, by so carelessly tarring these people, the 9/11 Commission is almost guaranteeing its own eventual failure. However many nifty ideas the Commission comes up with in its final report, if it has meantime helped spread the poisonous notion that our own government is meaningfully responsible for a cataclysmic breach of duty . . . well, then our government will not be so kindly disposed toward any of those nifty ideas, will it? This really is a foreseeable result. And it really will have been preventable. And we really will know exactly whom to blame.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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Win Now

A message for our times

BY LARRY MILLER

"OKAY. IT DOESN'T seem all right to me, but what do I know? Nothing. What do they know? Everything. So I guess everything's okay."

That's, more or less, what I've been saying to myself about Iraq for the last year. Not quite out loud, just muttered most of the time, when I'm alone, or when the kids are watching TV, which is much the same thing. What makes me mumble so?

Seeing a headline about another two, or five—or twelve—American soldiers killed.

Hearing the top folks say, "Nope, don't need any more troops. Got plenty now."

And especially, watching well-known nests of domestic and imported bad guys being allowed to grow and grow and grow and grow, and get stronger, and make their plans. And watch. And wait. And attack.

Anyone who reads past page two has known since the president landed on that aircraft carrier that Falluja was the headquarters, the homeland, the core of everyone who ever worked and killed for Saddam Hussein. It's not just a place, a city, a neighborhood, with terrific down-home folks going to choir practice and trying to get by in tough times. It's *the* place—the bull's-eye. It might as well be named Tortureville, or Saddamfield, or Baathburg. What in the world did anyone imagine was going to sprout up there in the last 12 months? A chamber of commerce? A garden club? A band shell for Sunday programs of Sousa?

All right, wait. Sorry. Let me repeat my mantra; that always helps. Breath in, breath out . . . "What do I know? Nothing. What do they know? Everything. It's all fine, just fine."

Hey, it didn't help that time. What's wrong? It's like what they say about heroin, the effect is less and less, until you finally have to take it just not to feel horrible.

I mentioned the aircraft carrier for a reason, something else I've held in for a year. I hated it. I support what we've done in the war on terror the whole way; President Bush was put in this job for a reason. I think we've started to crack the hardest granite in history. I think we're in World War Three, Four, Five, and Six-through-Ten combined—and I think we should be—but I hated that landing.

It made me wince like a big sip of sour milk, but at the time I didn't know why. I do now. It was an end-zone dance, and I hate end-zone dances. They're unseemly, and they always happen when the game isn't over. And this one isn't over by a long shot.

Now, the sum total of my military knowledge and experience has been watching the Ken Burns Civil War thing, and reading *Red Storm Rising*. I have no war fantasies, I have no uniformed service outside of the cub scouts, and I'm not an armchair general, although I'm a big supporter of both generals and armchairs.

I would never, ever be flippant about the risk and loss of the lives of our soldiers (or our police and firemen, for that matter), or of any of those who put themselves in harm's way to protect and serve. But when I saw that banner saying "Mission Accomplished," I thought, no, no, it isn't accomplished at all, it's barely

Larry Miller, a columnist for THE DAILY STANDARD, *is a writer, actor, and comedian living in Los Angeles.*

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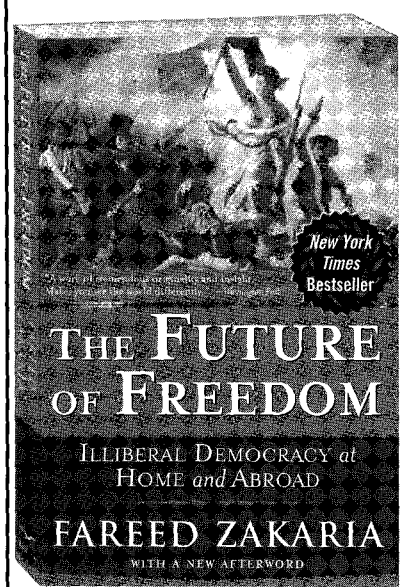

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begun, and if we're going to do this thing, accept this challenge, fully absorb the import of this moment, it's going to wind up making the Hundred Years' War look like a performance of *Nicholas Nickleby*.

And then came the press conference. April 13, 2004, a date which will live in . . . limpness? Bad counseling? Not letting your power come through?

Where's the guy I fell in love with? Where's the president who went to the World Trade Center, when those magnificent people were still digging, and someone called out, "I can't hear you," and he immediately shot back—*immediately*—"I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon." Where's that guy? The soul, the mind, the right leader at the right time, who so instinctively expressed the perfect thought?

But at that press conference, I watched with my mouth open, till I had to stand up, walk around, and shake my head. Who's coaching this guy, Warren Christopher? And please don't tell me his job is not to communicate potently, because, yes, it is. No one's asking him to be Cedric The Entertainer, but he has far more ability than his corner-man is telling him to use in the ring, and he needs to speak to the people who put him there, who want him there, and who need him to go, go, go, go, go.

By the way, will someone please tell me why every president thinks he has to call reporters by their first names? "Oh, hi, Dave. Good question, Liz. Yeah, John, what's up? Let me think about that, Julie. Good to see you, Tom." What is this, a board meeting at the Little League? Or is it a power thing? "I get to call you by your first name, but you can't call me by mine. And by the way, would you guys consider backing out of the room? Hey, just asking."

Being on a first name basis is never going to help him with the reporters in that room who are out for his scalp.

"Hi Don, I haven't called on you, have I?"

"Thank you, Mr. President. So: Do you feel you're a failure, because of failing, and when you fail, does it make you feel like you failed, or fail like you feeled, and is the mistake a mistake, or did you see a mistake, and with all the mistakes that you knew were mistaken, would you mistakenly make the same mistakes, or does the apology come first, to apologize to the families, will you make an apology, or should Richard Clarke just apologize again, because his apology was such a *nice, big hug*?"

Message to the administration: Win. Get your people out there, and tell them that the answer to every question is, "We're fighting a war, and we'll let historians worry about everything else afterwards. You don't blame the fire department for the arsonist. Unless you're stupid."

No one in Europe or on the left is ever going to change their minds from seeing a photograph of a Marine handing a bag of groceries to a woman in a burkha. Jacques Chirac is never going to say, "Well, they *have* built a lot of community centers. Maybe Bush was right."

Win. Stop building schools. Win. There's plenty of time and need for hospitals, but first . . . win. Yes, Iraqi girls can be very empowered by seeing a female major running an outreach program, and we'll all chip in for the posters that say, "Take Your Daughters To Mosque Day," but in the meantime, would you please *win*.

If I have to listen to one more spokesperson say, "The overwhelming majority of Iraqis is with us, it's just a small percentage of malcontents causing all the trouble," I'll be tempted to say something I swore I'd never say in life: "*Du-uuh*."

A small percentage, huh? About the same size as the few thousand Bolsheviks who took over the 100 million Russians in 1917? More? Less?

Naturally, I want to help out beyond just being a sarcastic crank (although that certainly has its place). In service of this goal, I'd like to offer a new slogan. It's based on the old antiwar chant from the sixties, "Peace Now!" You must've heard that one. Demonstrators have been shouting "peace now" for the last 40 years. Hell, I probably shouted it, myself, somewhere around '73. (This would have been shortly before the drinking age in Massachusetts went down to 18, after which my friends and I took to shouting far more sensible things, like, "You can't cut us off, it's only 11:00. Hey, let go of me.")

Here's the new one: Win now.

Okay, hold it. Sorry again. Maybe I'm wrong. Yeah, I'm sure everything's okay. Doesn't seem so rosy to me, but, after all, what do I know? Nothing. What do they know? Everything. Yeah, no problem.

Hold on. It's working again. I feel better already. ♦

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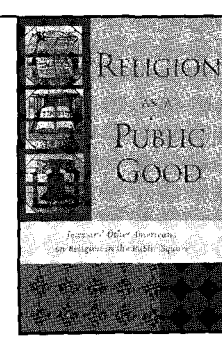

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The Net Nanny State

Click here for your government handouts.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

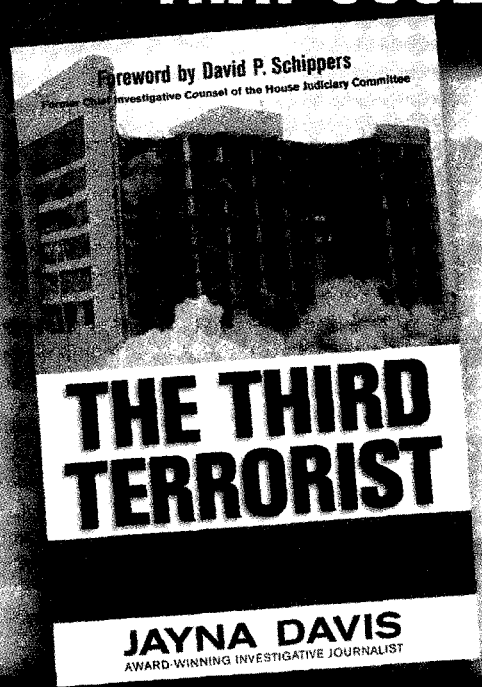
"A MILCH COW with 125 million teats" is how H.L. Mencken once described the United States government, but that was 70 years and 165 million teats ago. And anyway, I think he might have been wrong. Back in Mencken's day it was still possible to imagine an American citizen who had not yet affixed himself to his own personal bureaucratic mammilla—some man or woman, somewhere, whom the government had not yet uplifted or improved or beguiled or pacified by means of a subsidy, a tax break, or an all-out, full-dress federal program. After the New Deal, however, not to mention the Fair Deal, the New Frontier, the Great Society, the New Federalism, Putting People First, Pragmatic Idealism, the Empowerment Society, and Compassionate Conservatism, it is simply impossible to imagine such a person.

If you don't agree with me, I suggest you try the little experiment that I tried myself last week, in honor of Tax Day, April 15. This is the second year in a row I've tried my experiment. I worry it's getting to be a bad habit. Having just posted my taxes, and feeling tired, woebegone, and cranky as hell, I got on the computer and signed on to *www.govbenefits.gov*, an Internet service provided by your federal government. According to its press releases, govbenefits provides Americans with "a one-stop shop to find out whether they're eligible for government benefits. . . . Whether it's a direct payment, a loan, insurance, training or other service—there may be government benefit programs available to help."

Having undergone an upgrade earlier this year, govbenefits looked different from the last time I visited it—there's a bit more color in the interface, a livelier clickability, a cheerier tone all around. But its essence is unchanged. Govbenefits.gov was con-

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

WAS OKLAHOMA CITY THE "SILVER BULLET" THAT COULD HAVE PREVENTED 9/11?



In the explosive new book, *The Third Terrorist: The Middle East Connection to the Oklahoma City Bombing*, investigative journalist **Jayna Davis** documents a compelling body of evidence that illustrates **how Iraqi intelligence agents infiltrated the United States** in order to **recruit** and assist **Timothy McVeigh** and **Terry Nichols** in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building - **evidence which the FBI refused** to receive and investigate in **1997**.

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ceived as part of "egov," a government-wide initiative, begun two years ago, whose purpose is to hasten the arrival of the digitized Utopia by applying the marvels of the Internet to the functions of government. It sounds a little Al Gorish, but the Bush administration has pursued egov with gusto. And since the primary function of government, as currently understood, is to give as much stuff away for free as expensively as possible, govbenefits was quite naturally the first of the egov initiatives to get up and running.

And it's been a huge success. Since its launch in late 2002, more than 8 million eager citizens have paid a visit. In the beginning, govbenefits.gov listed only 55 benefit programs offered by the federal government—mere chicken feed (literally: some of the benefit programs were designed for poultry farmers). Today, it lists more than 420 federal programs and has begun incorporating state benefit programs into its service as well. Pretty soon, if it keeps going like this, there won't be anything you won't be able to get on govbenefits.gov. Which is the whole idea.

"There's a total universe of more than 1,500 federal benefit programs out there," the site's administrator, Denis Gusty, told me when I spoke to him last year. "Those programs, in total"—here Gusty paused, and I heard a sharp intake of breath—"well, we're looking at a total of 2.1 trillion in benefit dollars."

In answer to the question, Who is eligible for all this government money? the website answers, in effect: Who isn't? You may already be a winner—in fact, you almost certainly are. Govbenefits can tell you what you've won.

The opening screen invites you to fill out a questionnaire; the number of questions ranges from 23 to more than a hundred, depending on the answers you give. The screen also offers a master list of the benefits available—as a way of getting the folks into the tent, as they say on the Midway. The list offers programs for the very young (Early Head Start Program) and for the very old (Geriatric Academic Career Award); for the very smart (National Gallery for America's Young Inventors) and the not-so-smart (Vocational Education Basic Grants); for the merely unlucky (National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program) and for the extremely unlucky (Assistance to Torture Victims). There are programs for those who till the earth (Farm Storage Facility Loans), for those who labor beneath it (Coal Mine Workers' Compensation), and for those who sail its seas (Fishermen's Guaranty Fund); for those who want kids (Adoption Assistance Program) and for those who don't know what to do with the kids they already have (Child Care Resource and Referral Services).

There are programs for you, whoever you are, and programs for me. I call my programs the Ferguson Fifty-Three.

There are programs for you, whoever you are, and programs for me. I've never been a wealthy fellow, but I'm comfortably middle-class, and I've been working, if you call this working, pretty steadily for many years. So when I first filled out the govbenefits questionnaire last year, I wasn't optimistic. I gave my age, sex, and annual income, listed my previous jobs by category, enumerated my children, admitted I was not qualified to practice geriatric medicine, grudgingly acknowledged the number of graduate schools I've attended but never graduated from, and answered "no" when I was asked whether I suffered from hemophilia ("Only on Tax Day," I mumbled to myself, making a little joke).

As it happens, when I finished the questionnaire last year and hit SUBMIT, govbenefits told me—in a flash—that I might be eligible for 47 different benefit programs. This year, with another 12 months of Compassionate Conservatism under our belts, I was told I might qualify for 53! There seems no end to the amount of help the federal government might offer me that I don't need. The Ferguson Fifty-three, as I call my programs, are remarkable for their variety. Among them are a Poison Control Emergency Services Cooperative Agreement, a Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, a Dental Expenses Tax Credit, plus a National Heritage Fellowship. There's a Literature Fellowship waiting for me, too, apparently, or perhaps even Family Violence Prevention Services (Norman Mailer qualifies for both). I might lay hands on no fewer than 12 kinds of mortgage insurance. And Bioinformatics Research Grants. And American Jazz Masters Fellowships. And Cultural Exchange Programs in the Performing Arts. Maybe I could be a ballerina.

Gusty told me last year that the govbenefits site lacked one crucial element, and when I visited last week it still wasn't there—a click-through service that would allow the benefit-hungry citizen to gain access to his benefits directly from the website. Someday it may offer features even more precisely tailored to fit the individual citizen. Imagine a 24/7 click-through to your own personal government employee, who could come to your house and deliver your benefits directly, and maybe give the dog a bath, and mix you a drink if you're feeling blue.

I kid. I like govbenefits.gov, and will probably go back again next year. It offers a different kind of experience for those left woebegone by April 15. All day, all around, if you listen closely to casual encounters or tune in to radio chit-chat, you hear people bitching: about taxes, about Big Government, about the special interests that are eating us alive with their insatiable appetites. Govbenefits offers a different sound entirely. Come, it says. Come and suckle. Hear your milch cow let out its long, mellow moo of pleasure. ♦

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John Kerry, in the Catholic Tradition

He's no Mario Cuomo.

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

MY GRANDMOTHER was a Catholic Republican—which is to say, she was an Irish woman who married an old-fashioned South Dakota lawyer, and since he became a Catholic for her sake, it seemed only fair that she become a Republican for his. But like many converts, she soon outstripped her sponsor in the new faith, and she would treat with scorn the least suggestion that, say, Hubert Humphrey might be only unconsciously an agent of the dark, satanic powers.

She once told me that she had voted for just one Democrat in her entire life: a man named John F. Kennedy, and the reason for that was, well, the triumph of the old faith over the new. South Dakota politics in those days didn't bring religion much into play. If you had a good Scandinavian Protestant name like Sigurd Anderson or Nils Boe, you ran for governor; if you didn't, you didn't. But Kennedy in 1960 was a national figure, and even on the distant prairies, his name was mentioned from the parish pulpits. Politics is all well and good, but in the confessional quiet of the polling booth that year, my Republican grandmother made an act of contrition and marked her ballot for her fellow Catholic.

Of course, other voters marked their share of ballots *against* Kennedy for his Catholicism, and his opponent Richard Nixon did better in the South, particularly Florida and Tennessee, than he would have without a dash of anti-Catholic bigotry. Back in 1928, Al Smith's Catholicism cost the Democrats badly, although it's hard to tell by exactly how much, since Herbert Hoover was set to demolish anyone who ran against him. But in 1960, Kennedy's net national gain from his faith is believed to have been around a million votes and may well have brought him the presidency.

Reuters / Landov /Brian Snyder

The Kerrys arrive at the Paulist Center for Easter services.

Now, 44 years after Kennedy—76 years after Smith—the Democratic party has nominated its third Catholic for president. And it seems safe to bet the number of votes from people like my grandmother that John Kerry will receive solely for his Catholicism should equal just about zero. The number of votes he will lose should total around the same. Never was there a less Catholic moment in American politics.

Or maybe I mean a more Catholic moment in American politics—it's all so confusing. If you're a serious-enough Catholic to be tempted to vote in sectarian solidarity, then you're also a serious-enough Catholic to dislike the pro-abortion Kerry. And if you're a zealot who votes against anything with the least odor of Catholicism, then you probably don't have much choice except Kerry, the Catholic. For where anti-Catholic bigotry in 1960 came mainly from the Evangelical right, it comes overwhelmingly in 2004 from the pro-abortion left—who certainly aren't going to vote for Bush.

Kerry's incapacity to excite Catholic voters with his Catholicism was captured perfectly in the tirade about religion and politics with which he began Holy Week. Asked by a reporter about his Catholic opponents, Kerry replied, "Are they the same legislators who vote for the death penalty, which is in contravention of Catholic teaching? I'm not a church spokesman. I'm a legislator running for president. My oath is to uphold the Constitution of the United States in my public life. My oath privately between me and God was defined in the Catholic church by Pius XXIII and Pope Paul VI in the Vatican II, which allows for freedom of conscience for Catholics with respect to these choices, and that is exactly where I am. And it is separate. Our Constitution separates church and state, and they should be reminded of that."

The *New York Times* was kind enough to gloss this with the note:

Joseph Bottum is Books & Arts editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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"Mr. Kerry apparently meant John XXIII, as there is no Pius XXIII." But it isn't just the candidate's papal fallibility that makes a Catholic cringe. There's also the tone-deafness of saying "the Vatican II" for Vatican II: Kerry's superfluous "the" is not exactly what you'd call an article of faith. In fact, Kerry's whole answer feels *off*, somehow—a farrago of dated and half-remembered tropes, the garbled talking points of ancient Democratic campaigns, a mishmash of 44 years' worth of answers from Catholic politicians to similar questions.

Kerry's pot-calling-the-kettle-black business about the death penalty, for instance, is a slightly confused recollection of a late-1970s claim that the "Seamless Garment of Life" required Catholics to vote for Democrats—since the left was wrong only about abortion, while the right was wrong about all the other key pro-life issues of the time: capital punishment, welfare reform, support for Latin American Marxists, and so on.

Meanwhile, there's Kerry's talk of being "exactly where I am. And it is separate." What he's trying to echo here is Kennedy's famous address to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association in 1960: "I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute; where no Catholic prelate would tell the president—should he be Catholic—how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote." Finally, when Kerry fumbles an account of religious freedom at the Second Vatican Council and describes his private oath, he's harking back to the stand on abortion—privately opposed, but publicly supportive—that Mario Cuomo laid out, most coherently, in "Religious Belief and Public Morality," the widely discussed talk he delivered at Notre Dame in 1984.

Perhaps Kerry's pronouncements about Catholicism and America are merely the children of Cuomo's and the grandchildren of Kennedy's. But at least his forebears knew they were negotiating difficult territory. "Surely I can, if so inclined, demand some kind of law against abortion not because my bishops say it is wrong, but because I think that the whole community, regardless of its religious beliefs, should agree on the importance of protecting life—including life in the womb," Cuomo pointed out, although quickly adding that he wouldn't ever actually make that argument. But when Kerry claims that pro-life teaching is inherently *sectarian*—when he suggests it is, as George Weigel notes, "something analogous to the Catholic Church trying to force everyone in the United States to abstain from eating hot dogs on Fridays during Lent"—he has carried the separation of church and state into strange, new dimensions: The fact that the Catholic Church supports a position somehow becomes a reason a Catholic politician has to oppose it.

Last year, Bishop William Weigand of Sacramento rejected the claim of California's then-governor Gray Davis to be a "pro-choice Catholic"—and he was promptly attacked by Davis's spokesman for "telling the faithful how to practice their faith." Here's where Cuomoism always seems to end up these days: John F. Kennedy's promise that he would accept no orders from religious officials in the performance of his office has devolved into the idea that religious officials may not even instruct believers in the tenets of their faith. Indeed, it's not clear that Kerry has ever held even the Cuomoism of personal opposition to abortion; at a NARAL dinner in January 2003, he cited as proof of his credentials the fact that his maiden speech as a senator had been in support of *Roe* v. *Wade*. (He was wrong, as it happens, but that's another story.)

John Kerry is hardly the first politician to reject his church's teaching on abortion. Indeed, the question of what to say about public figures who claim to be "pro-choice Catholics" has been nagging at the church hierarchy for years. Since the Supreme Court made abortion a constitutional right in 1973, the bishops have been reluctant to impose any discipline on wayward Catholic politicians—for a variety of reasons, some pastorally admirable, and some not.

But time is clearly running out for all the figures, from Ted Kennedy to Tom Daschle, who have gone beyond Cuomoism into positive support for abortion. In January 2003, the Vatican issued a "Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life." Declaring that Catholic politicians have "a duty to be morally coherent," the note insisted that "a well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals"—and it named abortion as the most pressing of the matters requiring moral coherence.

In the months since the Doctrinal Note, the center position among American bishops has shifted toward much more explicit statements. Last November, the bishops set up a task force, led by Washington's Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, to study the question. This February, St. Louis's Archbishop Raymond Burke announced that John Kerry could not receive Communion in his diocese during the Missouri primary. Boston's Archbishop Sean O'Malley didn't go so far as to name Kerry, but he did announce that public figures who publicly support abortion "shouldn't dare come to Communion."

Nothing is yet settled. "We've come a long way from John F. Kennedy, who merely locked his faith in the closet. Now we have Catholic senators who take pride in arguing for legislation that threatens and destroys life—and who then also take Communion," Denver's Archbishop Charles Chaput declared this week. But on Fox News, McCarrick explained about his task force, "I think there are many of us who would feel that there are certain restrictions that we might put on people. But I think many of us would not like to

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use the Eucharist as part of the sanctions." Still the sheer fact that a centrist, and generally ameliorist, figure like McCarrick would raise the issue is proof of how far things have shifted from the bishops' old acquiescence to the Cuomoist line.

Kerry has ducked potential discipline so far. Campaigning in Missouri, he attended only Protestant services at African-American churches, and, this Easter, he took Communion at what even the *New York Times* called "a kind of New Age church," a Paulist Center in Boston that describes itself as "a worship community of Christians in the Roman Catholic tradition." (In religion-speak, "in the tradition of" is code for "not exactly part of anymore.")

Should the bishops decide that this is finally the time to insist on a little more "moral coherence," it's likely that the relief of faithful Catholics would be surpassed only by the delight of the Kerry campaign. The *New York Times* and other news organs generally favorable to Kerry have been among the most diligent in pushing the story of the bishops and the Democratic candidate. If Kerry is seen to be oppressed by the Church hierarchy, many of his backers would consider it a merit badge. It would, for instance, ease the conscience of pro-abortion groups like NARAL in supporting a Catholic, however much he's publicly pro-abortion. Of course, his defeat would become a higher priority (if such is possible) among pro-lifers, many of whom are Catholics, and the pro-life forces have been equally active in publicizing Kerry's struggles with the bishops.

We have, in other words, a Catholic candidate for president who gains votes from anti-Catholics—and loses votes from Catholics—for the sake of his Catholicism. My grandmother, for one, would have thought his Catholicism makes him worse, not better, than Clinton or Gore, and she would have voted against him precisely because he claims to be a Catholic.

Also because he's a Democrat, of course. ♦

A Challenger Haunts Specter

Why is the Bush administration opposing a conservative in Pennsylvania? BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

Lewisburg, Pa.

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that if President Bush could hand-pick the next senator from Pennsylvania, he would choose Pat Toomey. A young, smart, and likable conservative, Toomey currently serves in the House of Representatives from Lehigh Valley. He lines up with the Bush administration on nearly all of its policies, foreign and domestic, and articulates them in a no-nonsense, common-sense manner. He would be a tremendous asset in the Senate in a second Bush term.

Not only is the White House political machine not supporting Toomey, however, but Karl Rove and the entire Republican establishment are working against him. That includes Rick Santorum, Pennsylvania's other senator and a solid conservative. Toomey is challenging Senator Arlen Specter, also a Republican, whose chief (some might say only) virtue is that he is the incumbent. And in Washington, D.C., that makes all the difference.

The White House initially took a hands-off approach to the primary challenge. Says Toomey, "Nobody from the White House or from Senator Santorum's office has ever approached me directly or indirectly or through intermediaries and suggested that I not do this," though he allows that they didn't encourage him to do it either. Rove and company have not generally been reluctant to intervene on behalf of their preferred candidates, so their inaction in Pennsylvania was something of a surprise.

But they are making up for their slow start. President Bush has already made one campaign appearance for Specter, and he has scheduled a second, potentially decisive visit for April 19, eight days before the April 27 primary.

Specter's lifetime rating from the American Conservative Union is 43 out of 100, well below even some of his Democratic colleagues'. In a race that is largely a battle for the support of Pennsylvania conservatives, the endorsements from Santorum and Bush are huge. So Specter touts them everywhere and often, including in ads he's running on conservative radio—both Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity—and on television.

It seems to be working. Toomey took questions after a speech earlier this month to Union County Republicans. The first questioner said he was concerned about supporting someone who doesn't have the backing of Santorum and the White House. Several voters raised the issue in interviews, and later that day a student from Bucknell University told Toomey: "I'm disgruntled when I hear my two favorite politicians—you're third until you're elected—supporting a guy like Specter." Each time, Toomey patiently explained that political politesse "constrains" both the White House and Santorum from backing him and ended with a crowd pleaser: "Remember, Howard Dean had a lot of endorsements, and all he got was Vermont."

But a recent Quinnipiac poll shows Specter with a 15-point lead. More troubling for Toomey, the two candidates are splitting the votes of self-identified conservatives roughly in half. If that happens on Election Day, Specter wins.

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Toomey, however, says that his campaign's internal polling gives him a wide advantage among conservatives and shows that the contest is essentially a "toss up." His campaign calls it a surge. Specter supporters say the race was bound to tighten.

They're probably both right, so the race is getting nasty. Specter ads portray Toomey as a liar, a heartless politician, and, in at least one instance, an enabler of illegal behavior. I heard that last ad in early April on a mid-afternoon broadcast of the Rush Limbaugh show. Specter accuses Toomey, once part-owner of a bar, of owning an establishment where "drunks were served and drugs were sold."

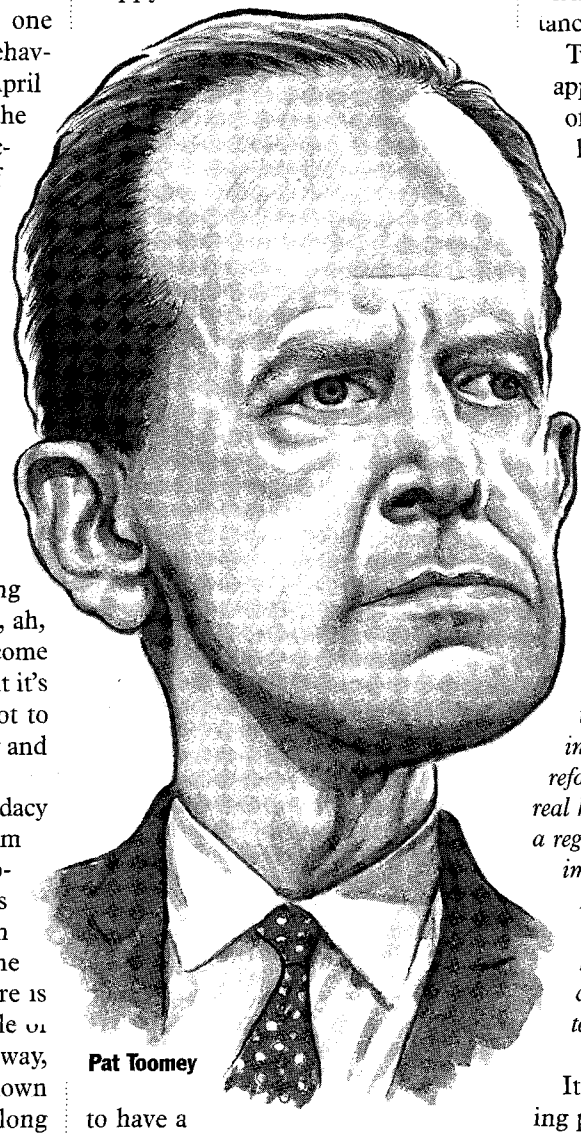
I asked Toomey about that ad a little more than a week ago. He had just finished telling a gathering of Republicans that despite their many political differences he feels no "personal animosity" toward Specter. Toomey said he hadn't known about the ad.

"Well," he said, taking a long pause, "well, I'm trying to not to, ah, to allow personal animosity to become part of this—[another pause]—but it's getting hard. It's getting hard not to get frustrated with the dishonesty and the personal attacks."

Toomey summed up his candidacy that day in a soundbite: I am from the Republican wing of the Republican party, and Arlen Specter is from the Ted Kennedy wing. With conservatives in control of the White House and Congress, there is an opportunity to reduce the role of government in a meaningful way, something Arlen Specter has shown no interest in doing over his long career.

Toomey's two-part message is focused: Rein in activist judges and cut government spending to return money to taxpayers. He makes a solid if unspectacular case—at turns philosophical and practical—for limited government, and he has gotten a significant boost from the Club for Growth, a group whose members pool their resources in an attempt to elect fiscal conservatives, often in place of liberal Republicans.

On the day I spend with the campaign, fiscal conservatism and judicial restraint do not seem to invigorate Union County Republicans or, later, Bucknell University conservatives. Those in attendance are strong Toomey supporters and say they are happy to have a conservative alternative to Specter. But the reaction to the speech is tempered. Toomey tends to lapse into high-school-civics-class mode, and he rarely raises his voice or mentions his opponent. "I don't know," says Francis Fallon, a veteran and a retired carpenter. "He doesn't seem too excited."



Pat Toomey

Toomey makes his strongest case against Specter not at either of his public appearances that day but in an interview between them. And it comes on a subject not at the center of the campaign thus far: foreign policy.

The challenger's critique of Specter is both substantive and harsh. The War on Terror is "as big as the Cold War or World War II," Toomey says, and Specter's "liberal multilateralist" foreign policy—like Senator John Kerry's—fails to recognize the importance of that effort.

Twice Toomey accuses Specter of appeasing terrorists, and as he ticks off the incumbent's transgressions, his voice grows stronger and he assumes a can-you-believe-this mien:

> *And now we have Arlen Specter announcing that he thinks it would be a good idea for a congressional delegation to go visit the mullahs in Iran, because they've been so helpful in this war on terrorism. Iran! State sponsor of terrorism, a country that is actively—actively!—undermining everything we're trying to accomplish on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, a country that we may discover is very much in league with the uprising that's occurring right now in Iraq, a country where the mullahs are undermining the movement for democratic reform—which is a real movement with real hope—in Iran. . . . So here you have a regime that's hostile to everything that's important to us and here you have Arlen Specter saying, "We should reward them and acknowledge how helpful they've been, and let's send a congressional delegation to Iran and to meet with the mullahs."*

It's precisely the kind of invigorating performance that the crowds this day didn't see. Specter has given Toomey plenty to work with. In a January 29, 2004, *USA Today* article, Specter declared that Iran has "helped us in the fight against al Qaeda and in the Afghanistan situation" and actually scolded the U.S. government for failing to appreciate these efforts. "I don't think we have given them sufficient credit. They deserve credit."

Illustration by Drew Friedman

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In a face-to-face debate in early April, Toomey criticized Specter for his relationship with the ruling Assad family in Syria. Toomey dilated on this in our interview:

The Pennsylvania primary voters understand that we shouldn't be cozying up to dictatorships in the Middle East—I think especially those that are number one on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. And that would describe Syria. Here you have a Baathist regime that uses similar tactics to the tactics that Saddam Hussein used in Iraq. It has a brutal history—a regime that continues to illegally occupy Lebanon, a regime that supports terrorist organizations that are actively attacking innocent civilians, especially in Israel, and yet Arlen Specter decides he was very friendly with the Assad family. And so he visited many times and I imagine he enjoys being escorted around the palace in Damascus. When the Syria Accountability Act was introduced in Congress there were something like 77 senators that cosponsored the bill. Arlen Specter not only refused to cosponsor it but he criticized the bill, and said it might embarrass the Assad family. There are some people who deserve embarrassment, you know!

Toomey indicated that he may focus more on Specter's foreign policy positions as the election approaches. Late last week, his campaign was running hard-hitting ads on radio and television criticizing Specter for his Kerry-like approach to international relations.

Is Specter in trouble? That's hard to say. Most public polls still show him with a double-digit lead, but Toomey campaign sources take comfort from their internal polls. What is clear is that Specter's lead is narrowing, despite his staggering campaign expenditures. In the three months since January, Specter has spent some $7 million, much of it on the personal attack ads his campaign is airing now.

Although Specter's campaign likes to talk about the inevitability of a primary victory, his panicked finish suggests that Pennsylvania will be worth watching on April 27. ♦

Iran Rants

Tehran's anti-American propaganda campaign.

BY A. WILLIAM SAMII

IN LIGHT OF Iran's growing political role in Iraq (to say nothing of reports of unofficial activity by Iranian agents), there is cause for concern in the steady stream of anti-American and anti-Coalition propaganda, including inflammatory lies, that continues to flow from Iran to audiences in Iraq and other countries in the region.

Even as a delegation from the Iranian foreign ministry arrived in Baghdad on April 14 in response to a British request for Tehran's help defusing the current unrest, radio and television stations in Iran were sending out messages tailored for Iraq and the rest of the Arabic-speaking world. Thus, on April 13, the Arabic-language Voice of the Mujahedin—which is run by the Iraqi Shiite group the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and transmits from Iran—claimed that the unrest in Iraq is part of a "scenario" launched by "the Zionist lobby that controls the White House." It explained that the closure of Moktada al-Sadr's *Al Hawzah* newspaper and the arrest of al-Sadr's aide are part of a plan to cancel the transfer of power to Iraqis so the United States can stay in the country indefinitely, plunder its oil wealth, and eliminate a culture that does not conform with Israeli interests.

A few days before, on April 8, SCIRI's radio station encouraged violence by speaking of resistance and saying, "The coming days may give many Iraqis a chance to emerge as national heroes." It went on to say that Iraq's foremost Shia religious authority, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, might be forced to issue a decree calling on all Iraqis and Shia to launch a holy war against the Americans.

From the beginning, Tehran has reacted to the American presence in Iraq by fanning hostility to the United States, on state broadcasts as well as those of SCIRI, which until last year was based in Iran. Virulent commentary is hardly something special in response to the current crisis. On March 31, for example, the Voice of the Mujahedin claimed that if U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz is appointed ambassador to Iraq he will turn the country "into a base for the Zionist entity." The Zionists, explained the broadcast, want to control all the country's resources and eliminate all national and Islamic symbols. The occupation of Iraq has brought "the Zionist entity" millions of dollars through its participation in Iraq's reconstruction. And a February 10 Voice of the Mujahedin broadcast accused the United States of involvement in a "holocaust" and "genocide" against Iraqis.

This kind of thing is typical of Tehran's broadcasts, heard throughout the Middle East. Like Voice of the Mujahedin, the Arabic service of the official Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting can be heard in Baghdad on four AM and FM frequencies. Iran also transmits in Arabic on the 24-hour Al Alam satellite television and on the Sahar television station. Sahar TV carried an interview on March 17 in which there was a discussion of alleged U.S. attempts to settle Jews in Iraq. A series about the destruction of Iraqi cities on Al Alam in March was entitled "The

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Harvest of One Year of American Occupation."

Nor are Arabic-speakers the only audience Tehran targets. It has responded to the replacement of the Taliban by a pro-American government and the presence of U.S. troops in Afghanistan with a relatively sophisticated multilingual broadcast operation designed to exploit ethnic differences in Afghanistan. This began in December 2001 and continues to this day. Afghanistan's largest minority, the Pashtuns, were the main backers of the Taliban, and Iran's Pashtu-language broadcasts have kept up a constant stream of anti-U.S. insinuation and outright lies that play on ethnic sensitivities and nationalism.

Referring to the late-March unrest in the western Afghan city of Herat, Iranian state radio said in Pashtu on March 30 that locals there were protesting the foreign presence. Another Pashtu-language broadcast that day accused U.S. troops of attacking local Afghan forces in the city of Jalalabad.

A February 2003 Pashtu-language commentary claimed "the majority of experts" believe that the United States is pursuing colonial goals in Afghanistan and Central Asia, and the United States wants to use Afghanistan as a base. Reports of Taliban and al Qaeda remnants are only a pretext for a long-term U.S. presence, according to the commentary, which concluded by stating, "The lasting presence of American forces in Afghanistan will not only lead to failure to ensure security in this country but also will add to the lack of security and give rise to more confrontations."

One recent event that provoked a rash of disinformation from Iranian state radio was the spate of bombings and attacks in late March in Uzbekistan, just north of Afghanistan. Commentaries in English and Persian broadcast from northeastern Iran on March 30 asked who stood to gain from the bombings, and accused the United States of using the violence as a pretext for its military presence in Central Asia. In an added flourish for the Persian-speaking audience, mostly in Afghanistan, the broadcast said that the United States would use the incidents as a pretext for a U.S. presence in southern Asia, adding that the U.S. military presence in Uzbekistan already contributes to insecurity there.

Finally, the broadcasts accused the United States of opposing Islam. "It can also be predicted at the international level that the U.S.A. may blame the recent terrorist acts in Uzbekistan on Muslims in order to stress that there is a connection between terrorism and Islam and to implement its anti-Islamic plans," Iranian radio claimed in Persian. The broadcast in English accused the United States of having "anti-Islamic policies."

Iranian hostility to the United States is not new, but it has a new twist since the ousters of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein: Perceiving itself as surrounded by an enemy, Tehran is pursuing a systematic effort to arouse the region against the United States and undermine peace in Iraq and stability elsewhere. ♦

Falluja's Friends

Saudi cheerleading for killers in Iraq.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

WHY FALLUJA? Why should this relatively obscure Iraqi city of half a million have become the crucible of atrocities against the Coalition in Iraq?

Some analysts say Falluja was a stronghold of Baathist sympathy. The reality is rather different. The al-Jumaili clan, which is a leading force in the area, produced two pre-Saddam presidents of Iraq, the brothers Abd as-Salaam Arif, who ruled from 1963 to 1966, and Abd ar-Rahman Arif, whose tenure lasted from 1966 to 1969. The first died in a suspicious aerial accident, and the second was driven from power, and then from Iraq, by the Baathists under Saddam.

The al-Jumailis have a long memory, and the downfall of the Arif brothers fostered a blood feud between the powerful tribal sheikhs and Saddam, so that when Coalition troops appeared in Iraq the al-Jumaili sheikhs ordered their followers not to interfere with them. That, at least, is the version told by al-Jumaili representatives in the United States, who decline to be identified in the media.

But the al-Jumailis now claim that tensions with the Coalition began with U.S. military raids on their strongholds soon after Saddam's fall. A *San Francisco Chronicle* report in late 2003 quoted Sheikh Mishkhen al-Jumaili denouncing U.S.-inflicted fatalities in the area. Reporter Anna Badkhen added, "Important members of the community, like al-Jumaili, went from being supportive of the U.S.-led alliance to being openly anti-American."

A more significant ingredient in the stewpot of Falluja's discontent, however, is local adherence to Wahhabism, the extremist Islamic sect that is the state religion in neighboring Saudi Arabia and whose purest expression is al Qaeda. Here and there, Western journalists have alluded to this; an Associated Press report noted that of the residents of Falluja, "many adhere to Sunni Islam's austere Wahhabi sect." Wahhabi mili-

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tants in Kuwait and other nearby states have begun collecting money, blood, and supplies to sustain the conflict. Even in the United States, some leaders of the "Wahhabi lobby" that dominates American Islam declared their solidarity with the "resistance" in Falluja.

Wahhabi sympathies complicated Falluja's relationship with Saddam's regime, which mainly repressed the Wahhabis, but also used them against Muslims in Kurdistan. Rahul Mahajan, publisher of an anti-American weblog titled "Empire Notes," admitted the Wahhabi connection to Falluja on April 7, politely denoting the fanatics by the camouflage term they prefer, "Salafis." Mahajan wrote, "Many inhabitants were Salafists (Wahhabism is a subset of Salafism), a group singled out for political persecution by Saddam." Wahhabis use "Salafi" the same way extreme leftists have used "progressive."

But where Wahhabis or Salafis go, Saudis are never far behind. Some Western scribes have noted the presence of Saudis among the foreign fighters in Falluja. At the beginning of April, as reported on the Saudi opposition website *www.arabianews.com*, the supreme mufti, or top religious leader of Saudi Arabia, Shaikh Abd al-Aziz bin Abd-Allah Aal ash-Shaikh, a descendant of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabi cult, publicly called on the kingdom's Muslims to "send hundreds of fighters to participate in the ongoing battle in Falluja."

The mufti's appeal was followed by prayers in numerous Saudi mosques for "destruction of the Jews and the Christians," with cries of "O Allah, destroy them! O Allah, disperse them! O Allah, support the fighters in Iraq! O Allah, grant them aid!" Media in the kingdom that had previously praised Saudis for going to Iraq to fight the Coalition and the Shias—hated by the Wahhabis as alleged heretics—exultantly reported that numerous Saudis had transferred their activities to Falluja.

In addition, Saudi government media encouraged the kingdom's subjects to hurry across the border. The official newspaper *al-Riyadh* used its front page to praise the terrorists in Falluja, describing them as "creating an epic chapter of combat against the American military invaders."

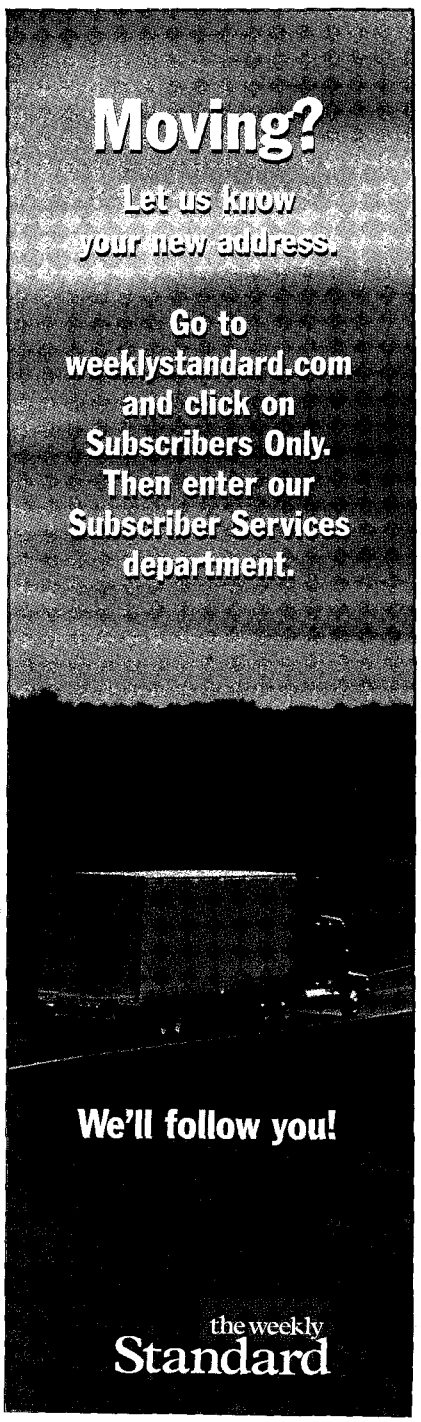
The consequence? On April 12, a Riyadh resident, Fahed al-Razni al-Shimmeri, reported that his son Majed, aged 25 and a student, had become "a martyr . . . in resisting the American forces' aggression in Falluja," according to the website Middle East Online. The son was said to have left for the jihad in Iraq just a month after the overthrow of Saddam. He was only the latest of many Saudi "martyrs" in Iraq to be eulogized in his homeland.

But Wahhabi interference with the Coalition has not been limited to Falluja. A Salafi presence became obvious in Baghdad itself when a major mosque in the capital was renamed for Ibn Taymiyyah, the 13th-century inspirer of the later Wahhabi movement. The mosque quickly became a center of Wahhabi agitation against the Coalition.

What to do, then, about Falluja? The brief "rebellion" of the upstart Shia cleric Moktada al-Sadr appears to be collapsing like a balloon. But Falluja may become the "Jenin" of Iraq. That is, like the Palestinian community that in 2002 served as a pretext for false atrocity charges against Israel, Falluja is emerging as a rallying point for those hoping to accuse the Coalition in Iraq of wholesale violations of human rights. The desecrated dead who thrust Falluja into the consciousness of every American are already forgotten by many beyond our borders.

In Iraq, efforts are being made to bluff Americans, and the world, into seeing an incipient civil war, or a "resistance" to foreign incursion, rather than the reality of the situation: an aggression by al Qaeda, supported by the Wahhabi hardliners in Saudi Arabia, who loathe the idea of a Shia-led democracy in Iraq.

If we are to prevent a repetition of the ghastly brutalities inflicted on the Coalition in Falluja, and if we are to protect the Shia, Kurds, and other non-Wahhabi Sunnis in Iraq against terrorism, there are two obvious steps we can take: First, seal the Saudi-Iraqi border, to shut off the northward flow of Wahhabi combatants. Second, tell the Saudi rulers in no uncertain terms that preaching jihad in Iraq, and collecting money, blood, and supplies for it, must stop. ♦



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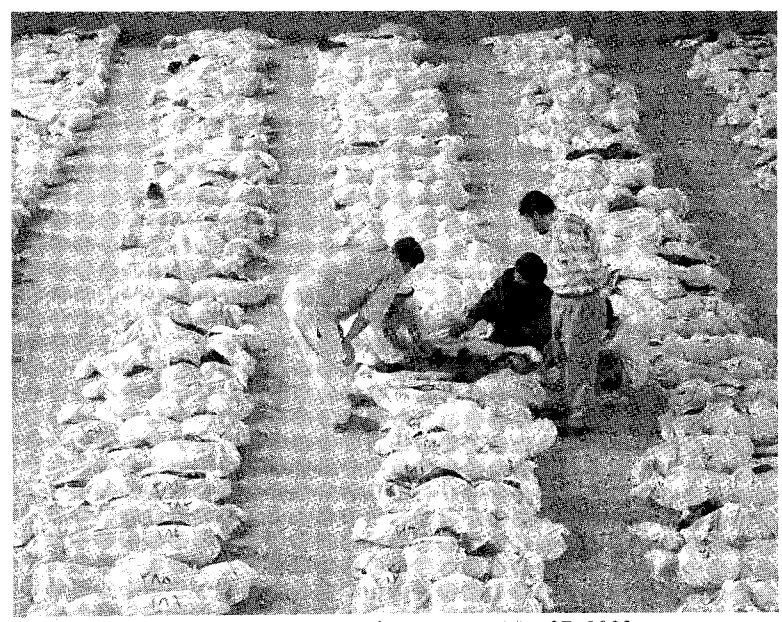
Uncovering Saddam's Crimes

The legacy of a mass murderer

By Fred Barnes

A field outside Baghdad

The dead don't talk in Iraq but their graves do. In northern Iraq, a grave was unearthed last July with several thousand bodies, mostly women and children. From the bullet holes in the top of the skulls, it was clear the deaths weren't natural. The victims had been shot from above while kneeling or after being forced into a mass grave. They had personal household items with them like baskets. They had their clothes on. These were clues that helped identify their hometown and led to the conclusion they'd been compelled to gather up their belongings and march miles to their grave. The exact date of their massacre was determined from the fact that their village had been razed at a certain moment in the 1980s, at a time when Saddam Hussein and his security police were carrying out mass killings.



Getty / Marco Di Lauro

Bodies from the Musayib mass grave, May 27, 2003

That's one story among many. Here's another: the tragedy of Musayib, an hour's drive south of Baghdad. When the Shia rose against Saddam in 1991 after the Gulf War, many men from the town were taken away. They never returned. Their families suspected the worst. A few weeks after the fall of Saddam in April 2003, their fears were realized. A large grave was found miles away and an orderly process begun to dig up bones, teeth, clothes, jewelry, shoes, identification papers, everything found in the burial pit. These along with the physical remains were wrapped in white linen shrouds and taken to a religious center in Musayib. Townspeople streamed to the center, opening the shrouds to see if they could identify the victim. When they did, sobbing and wailing erupted.

One more story: Mahawil. That's the name of the mass grave a few miles from Hilla, south of Baghdad. It was discovered last May and quickly overrun by 2,000 people from Hilla, who started digging with their hands and shovels. About 3,000 bodies, or separate sets of bones, were found. Killed in the round-up of Shia after the 1991 uprising, these people had been shot at the edge of the grave and fallen in or been pushed. Every hour as the digging went on, onlookers gathered around a hill to hear the list of names of those who'd been identified. Each name was met with cries of pain and sorrow. In all, 2,100 were identified. The remains of the other, anonymous 900 were reburied with markers and their personal effects on top. Now, a year later, Iraqis still flock to Mahawil to see if their father, husband, son, or brother is among the 900.

Mass graves are Saddam's most heartwrenching lega-

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

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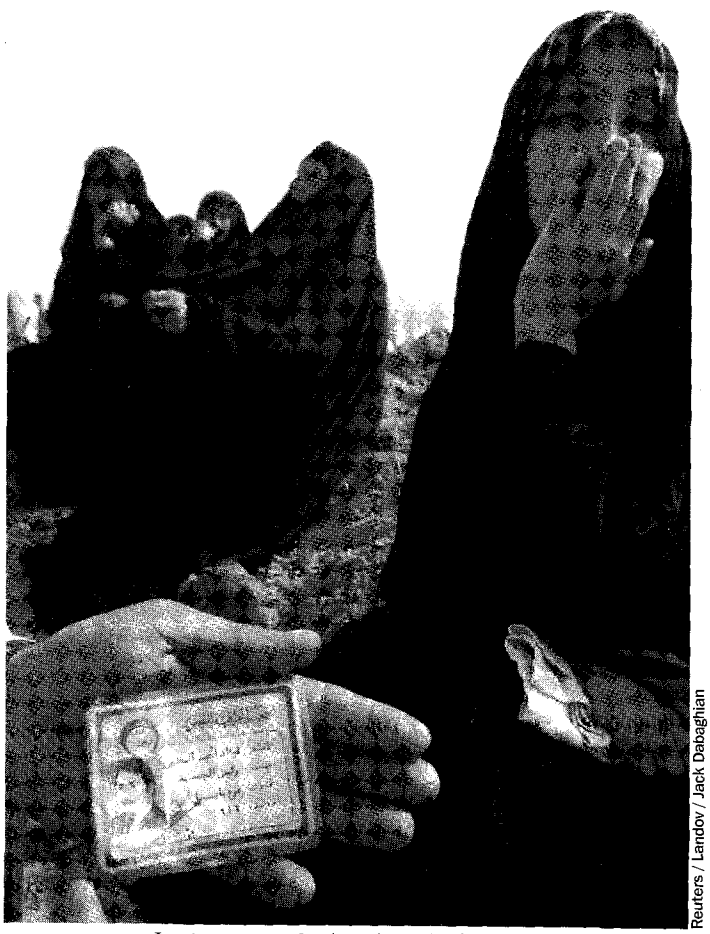
cy in liberated Iraq. More than 270 have been reported and about 60 examined, partly or fully exhumed, and confirmed. The proven death toll in the graves is more than 300,000 and rising. More than one million Iraqis were reported missing in the 1980s and 1990s, and mass graves continue to be uncovered. "There will be graves people haven't seen or don't remember," says Sandy Hodgkinson, the State Department expert who just returned from a grim year in Iraq working on mass graves. "It will be a long time before we determine how many sites there are and where they are."

The victims include men, women, children, Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Christians, political prisoners, regular prisoners, Kuwaitis, Egyptians, Jordanians, and Iranians—and I may have left out a few categories. The graves are spread around Iraq, many in the remote and barren desert of southwest Iraq. It was to the desert that Kurdish men and boys, grabbed in the middle of the night, were trucked—and then shot and buried. Some of the sites were uncovered recently by Kurds, traveling far from home and operating on their own. Others in the desert were pinpointed through satellite photography. One Iraqi told Stephen Franklin of the *Chicago Tribune* he learned of his brother's killing and burial only when an execution order was found after Saddam's regime collapsed.



Reuters / Landov / Jack Dabaghian

Iraqi woman at Mahawil, south of Baghdad

Mass graves in Iraq have attracted little media attention. But more inexcusable is the failure of the Bush administration to publicize the graves and what they reveal about Saddam. True, President Bush from time to time has mentioned "mass graves," but without elaborating. In response to a question at his press conference last week, he described Saddam as "a torturer, a killer, a maimer," before adding, "There's mass graves." But, again, he didn't say anything more. Yet, the existence of mass graves teeming with hundreds of thousands of innocent victims of Saddam's tyranny strengthens the moral case for intervening in Iraq. Mass graves humanize the moral case.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has, in fact, made this case in an impressive brochure entitled "Iraq's Legacy of Terror: MASS GRAVES." It was produced in January. But only now, 13 months after the invasion of Iraq, is it being sent to American embassies to distribute. USAID also funded an hour-long documentary on mass graves by a Kurdish filmmaker. The film has been ready since February, when Coalition Provisional Authority chief Paul Bremer screened it for reporters in Baghdad. I saw it in Iraq in March. It is an enormously powerful film, showing the devastating impact of mass killings on Iraqi society. Yet it still hasn't been broadcast outside Iraq.

It should be, and the sooner the better. When Saddam and his associates go before the Iraqi Special Tribunal for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide—trials will start next year—evidence from mass graves will play a crucial role in the prosecution's case. What have been dubbed "emotionally overrun sites" like Musayib and Mahawil can't be used because the evidence has been tainted for forensic purposes. So 20 other "full criminal investigation sites" or "pristine sites" are being examined and exhumed to document the crimes so that Saddam and his accessories may be held accountable. Saddam, by the way, won't be the first to go on trial. His crony Chemical Ali will be.

One day last month I drove to a suspected mass grave outside Baghdad with British archaeologist Barry Simpson and a crew of forensic experts that included anthropologists and two Finnish

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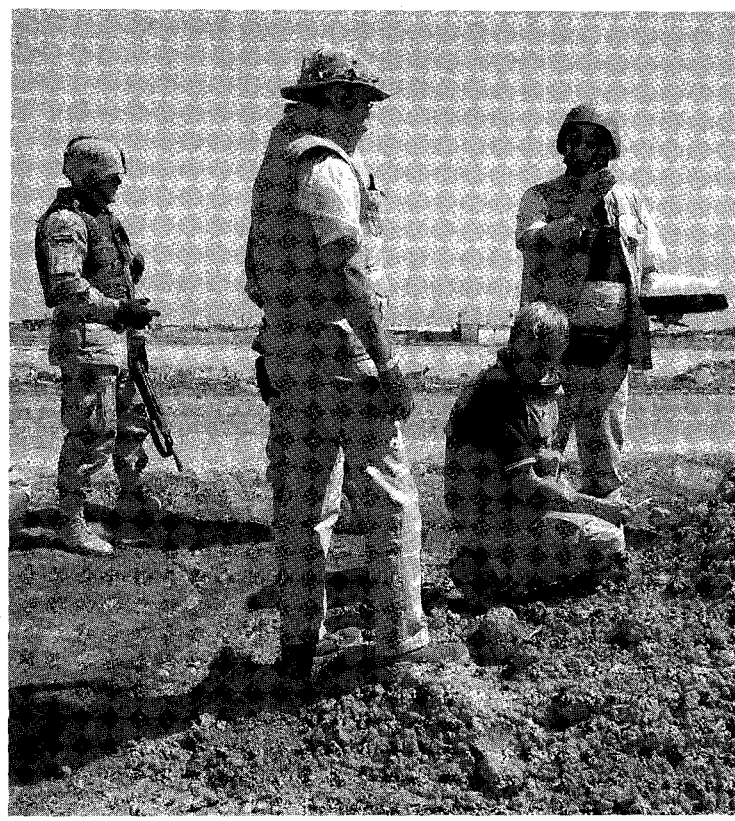
geophysicists who operate ground-penetrating radar. Simpson is a former Birmingham homicide detective with long experience in finding buried bodies. This rural site was a real test. It is dozens of acres and offers no immediate signs of any grave digging. A small section had been dug up by nearby residents. Simpson scanned the piles of dirt they'd left and found a few scattered bones—a femur, a tibia, several ribs, two small pieces of skull, two fingers, and part of a shoulder.

The site was viewed as a potential source of evidence because most of it was "uncontaminated," meaning not disturbed, and thus usable at trial. Also, it is located across the road from a military base. Saddam sought to hide his mass killings and mass graves. That's why thousands of Kurds were executed and buried in inaccessible desert areas. But other mass graves—Mahawil, for instance—have been found at military installations that were off-limits to Iraqi civilians. The executions and burials were carried out secretly, but residents were aware of people going in and out of military bases. Authorities have received tips that as many as 40,000 people entered the base adjacent to the field southwest of Baghdad and never came out.



Fred Barnes

British archaeologist Barry Simpson and his crew survey a possible gravesite.

Simpson's team needs a couple of things that aren't in great supply in Iraq. "We need time," Simpson says. And forbearance. "We depend on the patience of the Iraqi people." It can take six or eight weeks to examine and excavate a site carefully and scientifically. But the needs of Iraqis can't be ignored altogether. "We have to balance forensic justice and humanitarian recovery. It's not just evidence. It's people. There's a thing called closure. There are so many people missing that people need to know what happened. Until they recover their loved ones with dignity, they can't move forward."

At this site, Simpson tried two techniques. First, he wandered around the field looking for ruffles or markings in the ground. Picking a place, he summoned a bulldozer to dig a narrow gully. It was scrutinized for bones, clothes, or other evidence, but none was found. Then the radar that detects differences or objects in the ground beneath the surface was put to work. It consists of a large piece of equipment dragged behind a truck. Nothing unusual was registered.

The day's effort by Simpson and his crew ended without confirmation of a mass grave. But Simpson was not ready to give up. Only a small section of the site has been checked out. Mass graves can be hard to uncover. And not every mass grave is filled with innocent victims. One turned out to be a cemetery for soldiers killed in Iraq's war with Iran. Simpson says he will return to the field. "So many disappeared under Saddam's rule, so many people," he says. "They have to be somewhere. We believe something happened here. What I want to do is prove something happened here." He buried the bones he found. "I have to believe it's somebody's son or daughter. A few words to God and down they go."

The subject of Saddam's mass graves is so vast and varied that investigators have broken it down into chronological eras, just as historians have done with Stalin's episodes of executions and forced starvation in the Soviet Union. The most famous is the third period from 1986 to 1988 when Saddam ordered the destruction of at least 40 Kurdish villages in northern Iraq. Kurdish officials say the number is far more than 40. One is Halabjah, a village of Swiss-like beauty at the foot of a mountain range. There, about 5,000 people were killed by poisonous gas in 1988 and buried by surviving family members in mass graves.

A museum has been erected at Halabjah as a memorial to the dead. Its most graphic display shows the town after the gas attack, with bodies of adults, children, and mothers clutching infants lying motionless along the

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streets. Paul Bremer came to Halabjah last month on the 16th anniversary of the killings. "For those in my country and elsewhere who still wonder if the war [in Iraq] was worth fighting, I say come to Halabjah," he said. "Come see the tombstones of the 5,000 men, women, and children. . . . Look in the faces of the survivors. See the peaceful village turned into a hell overnight by evil."

The Halabjah atrocity became known at the time and has provided irrefutable evidence of a crime against humanity. But evidence in the other seven periods or episodes isn't as readily available. In 1980, Saddam targeted Falyi Kurds, a Shia sect. Hundreds of thousands were displaced. And while many remain missing, no mass graves have been discovered. In the second era, the killing of 3,000 men and boys (ages 15 to 65) of the Kurdish Barzani clan in 1983, a number of mass graves have been identified.

In 1988, Saddam committed one of his worst atrocities, the Anfal campaign. Anfal means "the spoils," and the spoils were 182,000 Kurds, mostly men and boys systematically arrested and taken from their homes. None came back. Many mass graves have been found where it's believed they are buried. The Kurds live in northern Iraq, but these graves are in the southwest desert. Those seized had no idea where they were being taken and they were killed clandestinely in a remote, sparsely populated area. Years later, with help from a passerby who had witnessed one of the mass burials, the Kurdish graves were located.

AFP/ Karim Sahib

A funeral in Karbala following the reburying of bodies from a nearby mass grave

Next came two episodes of slaughter and mass graves after the Gulf War in 1991. The Shia uprising led to many mass graves, including Mahawil and Musayib. Most are south of Baghdad, reaching as far south as Basra near the border with Kuwait. As many as 60,000 Shia were killed and dumped in graves. The Kurds, who list 1.3 million as missing during Saddam's rule, were hit again. In areas below the "green line" and not protected by American air power, thousands were murdered in Kirkuk and Mosul. Several mass graves have been found and confirmed.

The seventh episode occurred in 1999, when students rose in protest against Saddam in Najaf, the holy Muslim city to which extremist cleric Moktada al-Sadr fled recently. Many of the rebellious students were executed, and a suspected site of their burial has been located.

The last episode covers three decades of Saddam's killing of political opponents, which continued right up to the toppling of his regime on April 9, 2003. Saddam occasionally emptied his jails of political prisoners and killed them to provide space for new prisoners. Their organs were often extracted for use by ailing Baathist party members. Certain days were set aside for specific surgical procedures such as the transplanting of eye parts. Graves of political opponents are scattered around Iraq, many near prisons.

Inside the protected green zone in Baghdad, the Coalition Provisional Authority has an office of oral history. Iraqis appear there to tell personal stories of torture and atrocity. The most compelling come from the survivors of mass graves, the few there are. To its credit, USAID is now publicizing their experiences.

Three survivors of Mahawil tell the same story. Grabbed without explanation by Saddam's forces, they were blindfolded, their hands and feet tied, and driven by bus to the edge of a swamp. Victims tumbled into the swamp as they were shot. One survivor recalls a mother executed in front of her five-year-old child. The child was shot in the face. Three brothers pleaded for one to be spared. They were shot one by one.

That survivor fell in the swamp without being shot and escaped before a bulldozer covered the swamp with mud. Another was kneeling next to an Egyptian who leaped to his feet when hit by bullets and swept the man into the swamp with him. The third was wounded but only partially buried. They were the lucky ones. Many were killed even before reaching a mass grave, beaten to death with pipes or thrown into a blazing fire. The survivors recall no moments of mercy or regret or guilt by Saddam's killers. ♦

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An Affordable War

Bush's critics complain about the money being spent to rebuild Iraq. They don't know a bargain when they see it.

By Irwin M. Stelzer

President Bush used last week's press conference to argue that the short-term expenditure of American blood in Iraq is justified by the long-term benefits in increased security for Americans, greater freedom for Iraqis, and the possibility of a pacified, prosperous, and democratic Middle East that is no longer a breeding ground for terror.

But he has yet to address critics who contend that the expenditure of our money on the reconstruction of Iraq is not a good use of the nation's material resources. The Democrats are asking why we should be building schools in Iraq when our own educational system is in disarray (implying that money rather than a retrograde teachers' union is the problem); why we should be sending fire engines to Iraq when we are closing fire stations in New York City; and why we should be shipping billions to a less-than-grateful country when our budget deficit is reaching levels that even conservative Republicans find alarming.

The questions are reasonable, and highlight the fact that the administration has never managed to explain how we can be at war, which we are, asking sacrifices of our military, which we do, while at the same time inducing consumers to continue their delicious spending spree by mailing them tax refunds. Bush's argument that the tax cuts helped to avoid a serious recession is certainly sound, but it does not explain why it is necessary to make those cuts permanent now that the economy is—there is no other way to put it—booming. The president is promising guns, butter, and continued trips to the shopping mall, not to mention a walk on Mars, all on a buy-now, pay-later basis. And a rebuilt Iraq on top of all of that. Lots of gain, with no pain, and the blood, toil, tears, and sweat reserved for those in uniform or working to rebuild Iraq—a recipe for an election victory, perhaps, but hardly a sustainable set of policies.

There are three issues to be considered in assessing whether the reconstruction of Iraq is worth the cost: the reasonableness of the president's fiscal policy as it is affected by the needs of his Iraq policy; the affordability of the war and reconstruction; and the efficiency with which the reconstruction funds are being spent. If one were passing out grades, fiscal policy is the only failure here. But in the context of the Iraq debate, that hardly matters. The relevant question is whether our effort there has contributed importantly to the deficit, and the short answer is "no." Some part of the deficit is due to the president's tax cuts, and some part to the complicity of the president in the spending disease that afflicts the Congress. To the extent that past and recent deficits are due to the tax cuts, we can safely say they were worth incurring: They prevented the recession that the administration inherited from spiraling out of control. But to the extent that they are due to the president's expansion of the welfare state at a pace that would make Lyndon Johnson turn green with envy, to his willingness to soak urban taxpayers to fund the lifestyles of rich farmers, and to his repeated refusal to uncap his veto pen, they can at best be characterized as compassion run wild. So don't blame the poor score on anything we are doing in Iraq.

As for affordability, the stakes are so high, and the material cost so low by comparison, that there is no question we can and should bear the cost. Robert Kagan, in the new afterword to his influential *Of Paradise and Power*, does not exaggerate when he says "at stake is not only the future of Iraq and the Middle East more generally, but also of America's reputation, its reliability, and its legitimacy as a world leader."

The costs cannot be quantified as easily as the stakes can be identified. We don't yet know how much will have to be spent restoring security to a level that will permit reconstruction contractors to do their work: Estimates by the Coalition Provisional Authority that security costs borne by those firms would come to some 10 percent of the value of reconstruction contracts were made before attacks on these contractors' personnel reached

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Getty / Spencer Platt

Working on machinery at the Adora oil refinery in Baghdad, March 23, 2004

their current level of ferocity. Those costs have undoubtedly risen. Indeed, some companies now say that security needs are eating up 20 percent of the total contract price.

Nor do we know how long we will have to maintain troops in Iraq, or in what numbers. Add to the list of unknowables the ability of Iraq's oil industry to generate income for the country, the contributions that other nations might choose to make to the reconstruction effort, just how much private investment might flow into Iraq, and the increased cost of recruitment of military personnel as unpopular extensions of tours of duty coincide with a recovering private sector job market.

All of which is why the following calculations should be viewed as best guesses.

The highest estimate of the funds needed to "restore Iraqi infrastructure to its pre-1991 state" (as the Congressional Budget Office puts it) and "set the country on the path to representative government and a market-oriented economy" comes from the World Bank: a total of about $55 billion over the 2004-2007 period, 22 percent of which would go to the investment-starved electricity sector. This is well above the $18 billion that would be required to meet the more modest goal of restoring Iraq's infrastructure to the condition that existed before the recent conflict began in March 2003. Let's assume the grander of the two goals—reconstruction on a scale that gives Iraqis an opportunity to construct a successful, democratic state.

If the Iraqis can maintain anything like current crude oil export levels of about 2 million barrels per day, and if prices remain around $30 per barrel, assumptions I consider reasonable in the absence of a complete breakdown of security, oil exports should produce upwards of $80 billion in revenue over this period. (Using a price of $21 per barrel, but a higher estimate of export volumes, Iraqis put the figure at $69 billion.) Revenues in the range of $69 billion to $80 billion over the 2004-2007 period would cover the estimated operating expenses of the new government ($51 billion), the payment of Kuwait war reparations as mandated by the U.N. ($3.5 billion), and some interest on foreign debt (written down substantially), and leave somewhere between $15 billion and $25 billion available for investment in infrastructure.

The balance of the needed $55 billion in investment over four years, some $30 billion to $40 billion, would under these assumptions be covered by miscellaneous income that import duties and similar charges will generate for the Iraqi government, by about $2 billion in frozen Iraqi assets in the United States, and by the $36 billion already pledged by international donors, of which $18 billion will come from the United States.

Of course, oil prices might fall, and exports might not be sustained at present levels. But it is also possible that the rapidly recovering Iraq oil industry might ramp up exports, and that private investment might flow into the country, as it did when mobile telephone franchises were put up for auction. In the end, all will depend on the restoration of security so that foreign contractors who are now fleeing Iraq to avoid hostage-taking can do their work.

The safest conclusion for the 2004-2007 period—subject to change as the situation on the ground changes—is

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that of the Congressional Budget Office, the source of some of the figures cited above: "If oil exports and prices meet or exceed the assumptions made by the Iraqi government, and if the country's debt is reduced sufficiently to permit a reasonable level of annual payments, further U.S. assistance beyond the $18.4 billion already appropriated may not be necessary. Iraq itself could fund a robust reconstruction."

Note that these are not very weighty "ifs." For "if" oil exports do not meet Iraq's projected 3.3 billion barrels per day, it becomes even more likely than it now is that supplies will be tight and that oil prices will therefore exceed Iraq's forecast of $21 per barrel. The other "if"—foreign creditors will accept a substantial write-down of Iraq's debt—also seems to be a safe assumption. Arab countries hold about one-third of Iraq's IOUs. These autocracies may be far from enthusiastic about having a model democracy on their doorsteps, but they cannot be seen to drown the new nation in red ink. Next in line is Russia, which is eager to ingratiate itself with the new government so as to participate in the development of Iraq's oil industry, and has thus already announced that it will tear up about two-thirds of Iraq's IOUs.

In short, worries that we will have to starve domestic programs, or run the deficit even higher, to pay for the reconstruction of Iraq are overblown. The real money will be spent on eliminating threats to security so that reconstruction can proceed at a reasonable pace. Given the uncertainty that exists at this writing, the administration's reluctance to come up with a firm estimate is more understandable than it was just a few weeks ago. About the best we can do is start with the estimate contained in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2003, which calls for $62.6 billion for the Department of Defense to support military operations in Iraq and in other theaters in which the war on terror is being fought. Round that up to $100 billion, and add another $100 billion for each of the four years, 2004-2007, a reasonable period to use as the time span over which we will have to maintain a major military presence in Iraq.

That is not chopped liver, as we used to say in the old neighborhood. But the sum total of the probable costs of reconstruction and military operations over the next several years comes to no more than approximately one percent of American GDP. That is the number around which the debate should be framed.

This is the nub of it all. The cost of our intervention in Iraq is one percent of our massive output of goods and services; the possible benefits are a pacified Iraq with its sadistic dictator deposed, a terrorist base eliminated, notice served on other nations in the region not to tread on America, and a Middle East in which democracy has taken root. These benefits are not certain to accrue to us, less certain in my own view than in the opinions of more enthusiastic believers in the president's nation-building program. But betting a tiny part of our national treasure for a few years on a successful outcome in Iraq that will pay off for years and years (in perpetuity, if we are lucky) doesn't seem wildly imprudent, especially for a country with the responsibilities of the world's only superpower.

This leaves open one question: Are we increasing the chances that we will win our bet by spending the money efficiently? Certainly, the dollars we have poured into the revival of the oil industry, Iraq's largest cash-generator by far, seem to have been well spent, after a rocky start. The success is due in part to the skill with which the Pentagon recruited Americans to guide the reconstruction, and in part to the fact that Iraqi oil field personnel have had long experience in getting the most out of every bit of equipment, using the proverbial spit and baling wire under the old regime. Add to that the rise in the price of oil—a source of much grousing by motorists and on-the-make politicians here—and you have a revenue stream that just might cover the cost of rebuilding other sectors of Iraq's economy. The negative is that the Bush administration has decided not to privatize the industry, but to leave it in the hands of the state. That means that ministers will be in control of revenues, jobs, contracts, and other perks, as is the case in other dysfunctional economies in the Middle East. Good news for the posh hotels and shops of London, Paris, and New York, bad news for the average Iraqi.

The news from the largest claimant on this cash, the electricity sector, is not quite as good. It is widely known that the original team sent over to get the electricity flowing proved not to be ideally suited to the difficult task confronting it, and that American advisers revealed a tendency to survey needs rather than meet them, and to ignore immediate needs in favor of the construction of a U.S.-style gold-plated system.

The latest White House Quarterly Report on Iraq Reconstruction claims that generation capacity has been restored to its prewar level, and that further additions will bring capacity to 50 percent above that level by June 1. Unfortunately, having capacity is not the same as being able to use it to supply electricity reliably, without frequent interruption. Which is why Paul Bremer's announcement last October that Iraq was producing more electricity than under the Saddam regime was so misleading. Output reached that level by cranking up

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every decrepit piece of equipment in the country—equipment that promptly failed, resulting in a sharp drop in output only a few days after Bremer's photo op.

Unfortunately, even the enhanced level of capacity is incapable of keeping pace with the burgeoning demand created by liberated Iraqis' purchases of air conditioners, satellite dishes, and other equipment. Students of irony will appreciate a situation in which Iraqis are blaming America for the lack of electricity to power the equipment that they own only because the American-led coalition removed barriers to imports, cutting the cost of imported small television sets from $150 to $80 according to the *Los Angeles Times*, and raised their incomes sufficiently to enable them to buy goods unavailable to all save Saddam's family and friends until the hated occupiers arrived.

Part of the power shortfall is due, of course, to the ubiquitous security problem. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that Washington Group International, an Idaho construction and engineering firm, deployed 700 security personnel to protect its 350 employees who were setting up power lines around Falluja. And the *Wall Street Journal* notes that the Bechtel Group, which is also working on the electric system, originally estimated that it would need 6 security guards; it now has 169.

The result is that we are likely to see serious power shortages as the summer heat descends on Iraq, and battles by areas in which generators are located to prevent "their power" from being shared with the sweltering residents of Baghdad. A new team sent by the Pentagon to Iraq has, I am told, a better grip on the situation, and is giving a greater priority to the short-term needs to keep Iraq cool, even if that means the slower introduction of longer-term efficiencies such as a switch from diesel oil to natural gas as a generating fuel. The importance of this effort was underscored last week by the *Washington Post*'s David Ignatius, who listed adequate electricity first among the specific needs reported by his Iraqi friends: "Provide electricity everywhere, 24 hours a day, by the scheduled handover of sovereignty. If it takes an airlift of C-17s carrying generators, do it; if it means expensive temporary fixes, do it. The lack of electric power has been a symbol of U.S. failure in Iraq; make reliable electricity a symbol of success."

Good advice. But it had best be accompanied by a warning given in my presence by Harvard professor William Hogan, a leading energy expert, to those working on the problem. "Make short-term fixes. Buy diesel generators that are everywhere available and cheap since power prices collapsed in the United States. And then be prepared to explain to a congressional committee a few years from now why you short-circuited procurement procedures and wasted money on short-term fixes." Indeed, both the General Accounting Office and the Pentagon auditors have already announced investigations to see if some items were purchased without completion of the necessary paperwork.

Which explains why contractors are proceeding with caution, and why too little of the appropriated money has yet to find its way into the hands of Iraqi construction workers and others. This is the government, after all. So we have auditors worrying about dotting every "i" and crossing every "t"; the Labor Department starting to hunt down contractors who have knowingly or otherwise violated an old World War II law requiring them to provide adequate insurance not only for direct employees in Iraq but for subcontractors (premiums in Iraq can be 25 times those in the United States); environmentalists likely someday to attack companies for degrading air quality in Baghdad by using available diesel generators rather than waiting for the construction of natural gas pipelines; and Congress poised to roast anyone its famous hindsight will one day show might have done things more efficiently.

This is the government, after all. So we have auditors worrying about dotting every "i" and crossing every "t" and Congress poised to roast anyone its famous hindsight will one day show might have done things more efficiently.

Still, given the security problems that have income-starved Iraqis too frightened to work for foreign contractors, and even countries that supported the war withdrawing their construction teams, you have to give the Pentagon and others high marks for the progress they are making in getting schools rebuilt and refurbished, basic services restored, and some money into the pockets of some Iraqis. After all, the flood of consumer goods choking the markets and streets of Iraq's cities do tell us something that the statistics are missing—life is getting better, much better, and will get better still when the administration provides its generals with enough troops to eliminate hostile militias, assorted terrorists, and yearners-after-Saddam.

All at a cost that cannot be called excessive in a nation of three-car and two-home families, and in which 92 percent of the families classified as "poor" have color television sets. ♦

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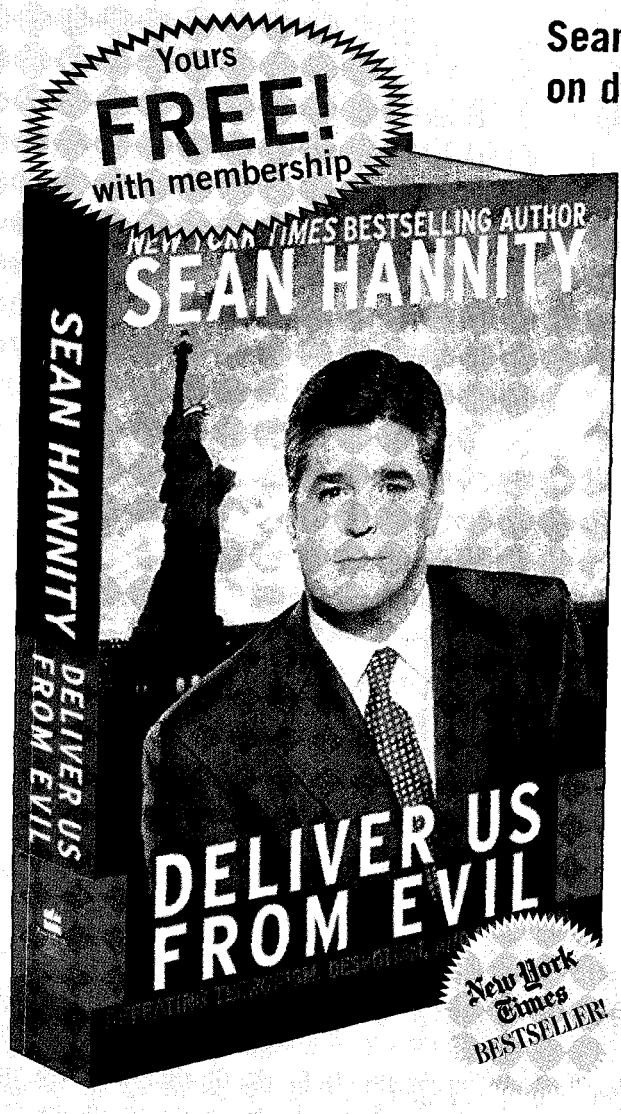
Defending our Freedoms at Home and Abroad



Sean Hannity delivers an essential handbook on defeating terrorism, despotism and liberalism

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9/11 and All That

By Adam Wolfson

British burning the White House in 1814

All photos: CORBIS.

Not long after the attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, the saying came into vogue that September 11 had changed everything. Certainly the publishing business will never be the same. September 11 gave birth to a new genre: the short book of big think, the effort to *explain it all* in under two-hundred pages.

In the first wave might be counted William Bennett's *Why We Fight*, Paul Berman's *Terror and Liberalism*, Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Just War Against Terror*, and Robert Kagan's *Of Paradise and Power*. Indeed, Kagan's volume set the gold standard. In a hundred or so highly readable pages, the author got to the very heart of the transatlantic rift. *Of Paradise and Power* became must-reading for journalists and foreign-policy experts alike, while his memorable catchphrase "Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus" found a place in the popular culture.

We are now in the second wave of the short, high-octane book. Many of these are more like extended journalistic essays than books—which makes sense, for several of them first saw the light of day in the pages of such small-circulation periodicals as *Policy Review*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Internationale Politik*. These essay-books forgo many of the *de rigueur* elements of scholarly works these days: pompous throat-clearing, extensive literature reviews, incomprehensible jargon, ponderous writing, and page upon page of endnotes. The new essay-books sport eye-catching titles and are generally easy to read. They inform and educate without condescension, and they are precipitated by cataclysmic events in the real world.

The Breaking of Nations
Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century
by Robert Cooper
Atlantic Monthly, 180 pp., $18.95

Surprise, Security, and the American Experience
by John Lewis Gaddis
Harvard University Press, 160 pp., $18.95

Civilization and Its Enemies
The Next Stage of History
by Lee Harris
Free Press, 256 pp., $26

Power, Terror, Peace, and War
by Walter Russell Mead
Knopf, 240 pp., $19.95

Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*, even more than Kagan's work, may be the model for the most-recent volumes. First published as an essay in the *National Interest* in 1989, and later expanded into a book, Fukuyama's *The End of History* understood the momentousness of the events of 1989: the beginning of the end of communism and the Cold War. Through much of the 1990s, a new era seemed aborning. Major wars and ideological conflicts appeared passé, most everyone seemed to be getting rich on the stock market, and there was this new thing called the Internet. People wanted to know what was happening and what it bode for the future. What kind of new world had we entered?

Not, as it happened, the one we expected. And in the smoky ruins of September 11, 2001, a clamor of new questions crowded in upon us—in particular, "Why do they hate us?" and "What do we do now?" For the vast majority of Americans, 1989 pales beside 2001. The attacks of September 11 changed American policy. In its aftermath the United States has launched two wars in Muslim lands, one in Afghanistan and the other in Iraq. The Bush administration has declared a new and controversial grand strategy, the watchwords of which are preemption, unilateralism, and hegemony. A giant new federal agency has been created, the Department of Homeland Security, and the powers of two older ones, the CIA and FBI, have been greatly enhanced.

But the most salient changes may have been of the existential variety. Americans suddenly felt hunted in their own streets, while at the same

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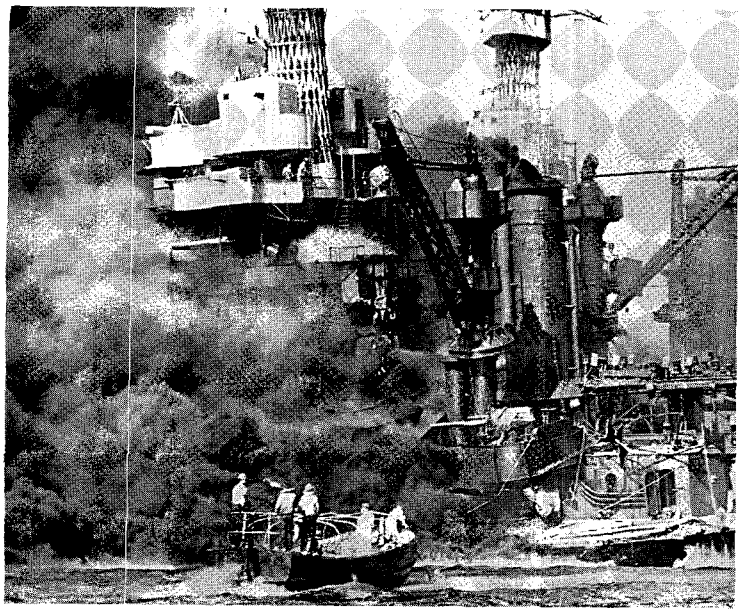

The Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor in 1941.

time they boldly unfurled the Stars and Stripes from rooftops. It has been a long while since patriotism and insecurity have been so publicly felt in America. And then there's the deep estrangement that grew between America and her allies in Europe over the nature of the threat posed and how best to deal with it. To understand these changing winds and to prepare for what's just over the horizon are the basic purposes of the second wave of essay-books.

The best of them is indisputably John Lewis Gaddis's *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*. It is straightforwardly an essay, filling a mere 118 pages of text, but intellectually it is a heavyweight and it deserves the popular success of Kagan's and Fukuyama's efforts. *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* has the virtue of being genuinely original, rather than merely clever, and is at once dispassionate and public spirited. Anyone wanting to understand the deepest intellectual and historical sources behind Bush's foreign policy, as opposed to all the blather about "neo-con cabals," should pick up Gaddis's book.

But this is not to say that the other books in the second wave are not worth reading. Walter Russell Mead's *Power, Terror, Peace, and War* takes a more comprehensive approach to American foreign policy, one that considers not merely the terrorist challenge but the economic angle as well. The United States must grapple not only with what he calls "Grand Terrorism" but also Globalism (or what Mead labels "Millennial Capitalism") and the interconnections between the two. Meanwhile, Robert Cooper's *The Breaking of Nations* should be read by any aspiring diplomat. In five simple maxims—"foreigners are different" and "foreign policy is not only about interests," for instance—he distills how the world really works. For those who warm to discussions of Hegel, Kojève, or Greek philosophy, Lee Harris's *Civilization and Its Enemies* might suffice.

For all of their differences, these four books are generally united in their understanding of the stakes involved. They tend to see September 11 as a turning point in American history—or possibly human history. And there's the palpable sense in each book of the author having stared into the abyss. Mead, for one, comments that unless we play our strategic cards right "billions will suffer and many will die in the ensuing chaos, poverty, misery, and destruction." Cooper comments simply that the twenty-first century may prove to be, in terms of sheer human misery, the worst ever in European history.

These authors share something else as well: They are muscular in their understanding of force. "Those who cannot stand us," Mead warns, "must learn at least to fear us." The urbane Gaddis defends American patriotism and states simply, "We have to be ready to fight." The authors seem to intuit that their arguments and dialectics are not worth a dime without a people willing to stand up for its way of life.

The weakest of these books, Harris's *Civilization and Its Enemies*, might cause some to sour on the whole genre. His dust-jacket blusters, "Each major turning point in our history has produced one great thinker . . . and Lee Harris has emerged as that man for our time." Well, no. But like the other essay-book authors, Harris manages to see the problem with fresh eyes. One of his points is that while the West still thinks of war in Clausewitz's terms, as politics by other means, the terrorists play a different game entirely. Terrorism for them has no other end than terror itself. The strategic bombing of Madrid just before the Spanish elections demonstrated that the terrorists also possess a sophisticated sense of the political uses of terror. But Harris is right to emphasize the need these days to think in extra-political terms.

Indeed, all four of the authors agree that the old institutions and containment strategies of the Cold War may not work against today's new threats—or at least have to be rethought and reformed. The central question is whether the Bush administration's controversial revolution in America's grand strategy, of which Iraq is the test case, is the right way to go. But whether Bush has in fact initiated a revolution in American foreign policy remains a question.

Bush's "revolution," as Cooper, Mead, and Gaddis all point out, may really be nothing more than a return of sorts to a very traditional American approach. America's original grand strategy took shape in response to the British sacking of Washington, D.C., and the burning of the White House in 1814. As Gaddis notes, John Quincy Adams hammered out, in response to this national humiliation, a policy of unilateralism, preemption, and the ambition of hegemony. This venerable policy would guide American foreign policy makers (with Woodrow Wilson representing a brief hiccup) until World War II and Roosevelt's multilateralist turn.

Notwithstanding all the years of multilateralism that followed Roosevelt and gave shape to our Cold War strategy, the unilateralist attitude is, as Gaddis comments, deeply "embedded within our national consciousness." And he continues, "Deep roots do not easily disappear. Despite some obvious differences in personality, John Quincy Adams and George W. Bush would not

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have much difficulty, on matters of national security, in understanding one another." Echoing Adams, Bush declares the key to security lies in an aggressive and expansive posture, not in the drawing of a Maginot line, as some European nations are prone to do.

But if they would understand one another, it's also clear that Bush is no John Quincy Adams. When it comes to explaining and justifying the policy of preemption and unilateralism, he could take more than a few lessons from any of the authors.

The reasons for the war in Iraq, as Mead, for example, describes them in *Power, Terror, Peace, and War*, were many and generally solid. Only one was the danger posed by Saddam's assumed weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of Saddam teaming up with al Qaeda or other terrorist organizations. (In making its public case for war the administration emphasized this reason, and it is now paying for its misjudgment.)

Another reason for war was that the policy of containment was increasingly working against American interests in the region: forcing us into an impolitic embrace of Saudi Arabia and putting us on the moral defensive for the humanitarian hardships suffered by the Iraqi people. And still yet another rationale was that of ending a brutal and sadistic tyranny and spreading democracy throughout the Middle East.

These were all acceptable reasons for war, but largely left out was the vital argument that, as Mead writes, "the United States needed to make a powerful statement to its enemies in the Middle East. . . . This was a war, and the enemy had to learn who was the strongest and, if it came to that, the most ruthless." In partial agreement with Mead, Gaddis comments that a deeper purpose served by the Iraq war (like the earlier Afghanistan campaign) was, possibly, "the psychological value of victory—of defeating an adversary sufficiently thoroughly that you shatter the confidence of others, so that they'll roll over themselves before you have to roll over them."

These are hard, dreary lessons about the ways of the world. I recall Don Imus making a similar point on his popular radio show: After September 11 we simply had to show our stuff in the Middle East, and Iraq was the obvious country for a demonstration of American strength and determination. Imus also wondered whether one could quite say this out loud. But if a talk-radio cowboy like Imus and a Yale historian like Gaddis can both say it, why couldn't Bush?

Perhaps the president believed the American people would not stand such harshness spoken in public. Or perhaps for all his inventiveness in foreign policy, George W. Bush remains his father's son, intent upon using the tools of foreign policy only for the most narrow of purposes. One goes to war not to make statements or strike psychological blows but to secure tangible assets such as oil fields or disarm clear and present dangers. That might at least explain why, when the weapons of mass destruction were not found, Bush seemed at times strangely tongue-tied. He had fought the right war but not for the reason he had thought he had fought it. At heart, George W. may still remain a foreign-policy realist.

It should be said that none of these second-wave authors is a self-described "neoconservative." Nor are they simply war hawks. In *Power, Terror, Peace, and War*, Mead argues that for America's foreign policy to be successful, it must do a great deal more in addressing the world's problems, in particular, poverty and HIV/AIDS. Wary of wars to make the world safe for democracy, preferring "federalism" as a solution, Gaddis criticizes Bush's excessive unilateralism and accuses him of arrogance in *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*.

Similarly, in *Civilization and Its Enemies*, Harris envisions a world of "mutual toleration among diverse communities, all of which are encouraged to pursue their own visions of the good life." And with *The Breaking of Nations*, Cooper looks forward to a "postmodern world" in which international law and interstate cooperation play the leading roles. These are important insights into

Terrorist attack on New York in 2001.

the methods and purposes of a genuinely *grand* strategy for the United States. We forget them at our peril.

But it is also true that foreign affairs will remain a rough business. America became a great power, one that affords its citizens untold levels of security and comfort, in part by means less pure than simply standing forth brightly as a shining city upon a hill. Most such cities may be admired for a while but also do not wait long to be conquered by jealous and rapacious neighbors.

Gaddis is intent upon reminding a new generation of Americans of this point—a generation that has never had to get its hands dirty or to pay the price of freedom and security. "We got to where we are by means that we cannot today, in their entirety, comfortably endorse," Gaddis writes. "Comfort alone, however, cannot be the criterion by which a nation shapes its strategy and secures its safety. The means of confronting danger do not disqualify themselves from consideration solely on the basis of the uneasiness they produce."

It's not a point you're likely to find made in the typical academic tome, or even by an American president. But Gaddis—and Cooper, Mead, and Harris—have written richly informative tracts meant to teach deeper lessons to a wider public.

Let's hope they succeed. ♦

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Robert Heinlein

Heinlein's Debut

He got a lot better.

BY JOHN WILSON

In the fall of 1938, a thirty-one-year-old former naval officer named Robert A. Heinlein, who'd been invalided out of the service with tuberculosis, had just lost a bruising primary campaign for a seat in the California State Assembly. Low on money and job prospects, Heinlein decided to write a novel, *For Us, the Living*, in which he would set the world straight. In his futuristic fantasy, he took on all the burning issues of his own day: unemployment (Heinlein believed that Social Credit, the system most notably promoted by C.H. Douglas and championed with messianic vigor by Ezra Pound, would settle that problem once and for all); puritanism (in Heinlein's imagined future of 2086, nudity is taken for granted and sexual jealousy is unknown); and the urgent need for spelling reform ("DANJER! OBTAN DARK GLASES FROM STUARDES BEFORE VUING SON" reads a sign in the world of 2086).

For Us, the Living
A Comedy of Customs
by Robert A. Heinlein
Scribner, 263 pp., $25

And the European crisis that was deepening as Heinlein composed his novel during the last months of 1938? In his future history, the United States prudently stayed out of the Second World War, which "ran its course" and then petered out with Germany's economic collapse. A really disastrous European war—the Forty Years War—came later, after a united Europe (a constitutional monarchy with the Duke of Windsor drafted to serve as titular emperor) had enjoyed several decades of peace and prosperity. This war, which lasted from 1970 to 2010, nearly depopulated the continent.

Once again, a wise American president kept the United States out of the faraway conflict, cutting off relations with Europe altogether. But Heinlein's protagonist in *For Us, the Living*, Perry Nelson—an inadvertent time-traveler from 1939 who has been getting a crash course from Diana, his lovely hostess in 2086—has a question about what happened to Europe after the war. "We don't know, Perry," Diana answers. "The Non-Intercourse rule has never been fully lifted and we have never resumed commercial or diplomatic relations. The population is increasing slowly. It is largely agrarian and the economy is mostly of the village and countryside character. Most of the population is illiterate and technical skill is almost lost. Our knowledge is incomplete although we maintain missions in several places for ethnological and sociological study." Those "ethnological and sociological" missions are a nice touch. So much for Old Europe.

Every year, hundreds, perhaps thousands of supremely confident men write tracts purporting to be novels, mostly of the self-published variety, certain that they have the answers to the world's most pressing problems. (Women seem not to be as vulnerable to this particular form of hubris.) Heinlein's *For Us, the Living* was rejected by Macmillan and Random House, and that could easily have been the end of his career as a writer.

But something quite unpredictable happened. Even before he received the final rejections of his novel, Heinlein sold his first story, "Life-Line," to *Astounding* magazine, the leading science-fiction publication of the time. More stories quickly followed. Heinlein had transformed himself overnight from a windy would-be *philosophe* to a teller of tales, superbly compact, assured, bristling with ideas yet moving forward with propulsive narrative drive. One day he was a writer no one had heard of; the next day he was "RAH," the most commanding presence in "golden age" science fiction. He set *For Us, the Living* aside, cannibalizing it for other works until it had outlived its usefulness. Some years after Heinlein's death in 1988, a researcher named Robert James learned of the unpublished novel and tried to track down a copy of the manuscript. The trail eventually led to a jumble of boxes in a garage. And now the book has been published at last.

Readers who are familiar with Heinlein the vigilant anti-Communist, whose 1951 novel, *The Puppet Masters*, appeared even as many of his peers were pooh-poohing "The Red Scare," may be surprised by the hyper-isolationism of this early work. But it makes perfect sense in the utopian scheme of *For Us, the Living*, which is subtitled "A Comedy of Customs." Europe represents the atavistic human world dominated by unexamined tradition, while the enlightened America of Heinlein's novel

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represents the triumph of science, free-thinking, and plain old Yankee pragmatism. How foolish the old superstitions appear in the cool light of reason! Indeed, so complete is the transformation that Diana, the winsome Everywoman of 2086, can't even grasp what Perry is talking about when he refers to the murder mysteries that were so popular in 1939 (murder evidently being so rare in the sweetly reasonable future that the very idea of the genre is bizarre).

Not that utopia was achieved without a struggle. In his future-history lessons, Perry learns about the despicable Nehemiah Scudder, "founder of the New Crusade and leader of the Neo-Puritans," who made a determined effort to turn the clock back. His movement gained momentum early in the 2020s and for a time threatened to sweep the nation but was eventually vanquished. In 2028, a new constitution was ratified, the most important provision of which was "that no law was constitutional that deprived any citizen of any liberty of action which did not interfere with the equal freedom of another citizen."

Still, one never knows when the religious virus will break out again, and so the state must exercise due caution. As one of Perry's instructors explains,

> We look with disfavor on a church which fills children's minds with sadistic tales of a cruel vengeful tribe of barbarians under the guise of teaching them the revealed word of God. We disapprove of exhibiting pictures and statues of a man spiked to a wooden frame. I say we disapprove—but we do not forbid, for the damage, though probably greater than habit-forming drugs, is hard to prove, but we do insist on some years of instruction through the public development centers to clean their minds of the sadism, phobias, simple misstatements of fact, faulty identifications, and confusion of abstractions that their preachers and priests have labored to instill.

Ah, the usefulness of "public development centers." As a novel, *For Us, the Living* will not enhance Heinlein's reputation. It most closely resembles the talky, jokey, narcissistic fables of his dotage, books such as *"The Name of the Beast"* and *To Sail Beyond the Sunset*. And yet there is one quality that this failed utopia conspicuously shares with his enduring works—including the best of his thirteen juvenile novels, books such as *Time for the Stars* and *Citizen of the Galaxy*, written in the late 1950s—and that difference is authority, which Heinlein had in spades.

Writers as different from each other, and from Heinlein, as Harlan Ellison and Samuel Delaney cite the way he casually sketched the features of an unfamiliar world: "The door dilated." Such "science-fiction sentences," as Delaney calls them—compelling the reader to participate in creating an imaginative reality—gave Heinlein, at his best, a seductive persuasiveness, grounded as well in his knowledge of science and mathematics. The supreme confidence that fueled the grandiosity of his misbegotten first novel was turned to a strength when he submitted, however grudgingly, to the demands of storytelling and the peculiar conventions of the science-fiction genre. ♦

A Nervy Business

Glyn Maxwell's latest volume of poetry.

BY DAVID MASON

If W.H. Auden and Robert Frost were reincarnated in one body—try not to think too hard about this—and that body belonged to a forty-one-year-old British poet living in America, he might write something like Glyn Maxwell.

I mean that as a compliment. From Auden, Maxwell gets a facility with multiple forms, a fondness for occasional syntactical contortions, and an example for how to face his generation's largely suburban experience. Maxwell is a substantial writer, but he can turn out deft comic lyrics like "Deep Sorriness Atonement Song" from *The Breakage* (1998):

The Nerve
by Glyn Maxwell
Mariner, 64 pp., $13

All the people who were rubbish when we needed them to do it,
Whose wires crossed, whose spirits failed, who ballsed it up or blew it,
All notchers of nul points *and all who have a problem Houston,*
At least they weren't at Kensington when they should have been at Euston.
For I didn't build the Wall
And I didn't cause the Fall
But I'm sorry, Lord I'm sorry,
I'm the sorriest of all.

There's more than a dash of Auden's friend Louis MacNeice in this as well. One of Maxwell's exploits has been to journey to Iceland, just as Auden and MacNeice did in the 1930s. Maxwell traveled with Simon Armitage, another bright star of the "New Generation Poets" (as they were dubbed by England's *Poetry Review*). Parallels with Auden also include Maxwell's gargantuan productivity—plays, opera libretti, novels in verse and prose, a travel book, and of course the volumes of poetry.

Frost's influence is another matter, offering cagey strategies for dealing with life's seriousness without becoming maudlin. There are at least two apparent suicides in *The Nerve*, Maxwell's most recent collection, yet it never feels dreary because, like Frost,

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he understands the place of suffering and can work with a light touch, referring at one point to "Recurring errors I could term a style." His place in contemporary poetry is quieter than Auden's, but growing in power: He's now on the faculty at Princeton and has for more than two years acted as poetry editor for the *New Republic*.

The fact that Maxwell is riding high would mean little if he were not also writing well. *The Nerve* confirms the impression that he is among the best poets of his generation. His obvious verbal gifts often serve brief narratives, rather like the lyrics of Thomas Hardy and E.A. Robinson. "The Man Who Held His Funeral," for example, appears to be about a chauffeur or professional driver of some sort. "Refugees in Massachusetts" is about what its title promises, and all the more *au courant* for that. And "A Hunting Man" is about one of those ambiguous suicides—enough material for a novella conveyed in twenty-four understated lines.

These and other poems evoke a variety of lives with fresh compassion and just enough ironic distance, never condescending to his subjects. Surely he enjoys his own gift for verbal games, but he's well beyond adolescent self-displays. "Stopit and Nomore" contains this terse description of domestic catastrophe: *Her Cerberus / of a parent / primed his gun and scribbled his last bark.* And this about the daughter left behind:

She was thirteen. Given everything, she thrived,
was told the names for this and that, it seems
too late for them to hold. She lived in homes belonging
to scientists and careers, then she lived

in foster homes. It went to court. In time
it fell to her exonerated mother
to take her back. And back she went forever.
I found her
cited in a book I read, Genome,

proving what she proves, or at least supports,
though some say it's too muddied by the life
to pass for science. I say words arrive
too late
for love, or love is gone too soon for words.

There are less unsettling poems about Maxwell's own family life, and the collection is framed by two poems about an inscrutable natural world—sea and snow—and about how our minds touch upon such things with a Frostian skepticism.

One drawback to ironic deftness is that it prevents some poems from building or opening up their fuller implications, and *The Nerve* contains a few poems, such as "Today" and "The Year in Pictures," that simply stop rather than finding the right closure. Others need several readings before their meanings come clear. But Maxwell is never off-putting or dismissive of his readers, and he can be charming in brief poems too, as in the four lines of "Colorado Morning": *Loping around the more or less dead straight / lines where skiers were, / some shy, nocturnal creature's one and only / shot at its signature.*

Lines and signatures, the characteristic patterns of human lives, seen here in the context of a rather anonymous universe—these are the poet's quiet obsessions, articulated with mature precision. Our nerves are lines of sensitive impulse, connecting brain and body. Real poetry, the sort Maxwell offers at his best, is in every way a nervy business. ♦

Father Knows Worst

Why paternity doesn't suit Hollywood.

BY GABY WENIG

I once asked my Jewish studies teacher, a mother of eleven, why women were expected to take care of children, and not men. "Women have breasts," she said, enunciating every word slowly while gesturing vaguely at her chest, "that they use to feed the babies. Men don't." In the years since, when I read serious feminist tomes about a woman's role in society or had lengthy discussions with friends about working mothers, or even when I listened to university lecturers and petulant classmates prattle on about "essentialism," the audacious simplicity of Mrs. Cohen's answer always came to mind. Women were biologically geared to nurture babies, and men weren't.

At a screening of the new Kevin Smith film, *Jersey Girl*, it seemed to me that Hollywood shares this view—the movie industry's new-age feminism notwithstanding. Watching Ollie Trinke (played by Ben Affleck) fumble his way through diaper changes and bottle feeding, I felt a queasy sense of déjà vu at his ineptness. Over the years, we have suffered endless comedies about fish-out-of-water fathers, standard fare like *Mr. Mom* (1983), where Michael Keaton tried to take over running the household when his wife went to work, or *Three Men and a Baby* (1987), where three swinging bachelors found their lifestyle stymied by a baby that landed on their doorstep, or last year's *Daddy Day Care*, in which Eddie Murphy's foolproof plan of opening a day-care center is wrecked by his inability to take care of a gaggle of hyperactive children. For Hollywood, missing mammary glands have always been a sign that the child-care gene was missing as well.

But, then again, American movies have always been strangely ambivalent about paternal figures. In his 1996 *Life Without Father*, family researcher David Popenoe traces the decline in patriarchal authority in America from its apogee in the Puritan era to its deflated status today. Popenoe attributes the decline to a number of factors—such as men's dependency on work outside the home, the rise of individualism, mandatory schooling (which placed another moral authority in the lives of

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children), the Victorian cult of the mother, and modern feminism—all of which helped transfer household authority from fathers to mothers.

So perhaps it's not surprising that, with few exceptions, Hollywood has portrayed single fathers as parental buffoons kicked into shape by the difficulties of child care. The genre has been around for decades. The Three Stooges poked and bumped their way through baby care in *Mutts to You* (1938) and *Sock-a-Bye Baby* (1942); a trio of cowboys on the lam found a baby and meaning in their lives in John Ford's *3 Godfathers* (1948); and Bob Hope found himself with child after a baby was abandoned at the United Nations in *A Global Affair* (1964). Other films too exploited the unnaturalness of male child care, such as *Sitting Pretty* (1948), about a family that employs a weird male babysitter, or even *The Bachelor Father* (1931) about a man who decides quite late in life to get to know his children. "What shall we call you?" his children ask him. "'Sir Basil' seems a little distant, but 'Father' is out of the question."

Not that it was all absurdity. In the 1960s, sitcoms such as *My Three Sons* and *A Family Affair* showcased level-headed, dignified patriarchs who gave single fatherhood an imprimatur of social respectability. Still, childcare is rarely shown as a choice of these fathers. In the films, fatherhood of the tangible, hands-on kind is something that happens when life goes awry. Dad becomes a Mom when his spouse dies (*Jersey Girl*), when he loses his job (*Daddy Day Care* and *Mr. Mom*), or when he finds an abandoned baby (*Three Men and a Baby*). The crisis and the gender-inversion resolution create the ensuing comedy, with men doing their best to disgrace their gender by their pitiful ignorance. Such films typically include sight gags that involve a horrible diaper change, and they invariably include a shot of men holding the baby awkwardly at arms' length. Most have some kind of "freak-out" scene, when it dawns on the man that by golly, this little ten-pound bundle that yelps and drools and chucks is here to stay.

Jersey Girl

All photos: Everrett Collection.

Predictably and disappointingly, *Jersey Girl* follows this same time-wearied formula. It is an adequate comedy with some nice touches to it, particularly the opening scene in which little children talk about their families, and Smith captures the funny awkwardness of the inarticulate youngsters. Thankfully the film is reluctant to degenerate into complete slapstick. Instead it errs in the opposite direction and is at times quite maudlin, with a goodly number of soul-searching speeches and meaningful looks into eyes.

Mr. Mom

The main protagonist in *Jersey Girl* is Ollie Trinke, a high-powered PR executive, married to Gertrude (Jennifer Lopez), a successful literary agent. Manhattan is their oyster. They attend swanky parties where they cavort with the rich and famous and go for romantic horse and carriage rides in Central Park. But the high life they lead is curtailed when Gertrude dies in childbirth, leaving Ollie with a broken heart and a baby.

Ollie takes the little Gertie to live with his own father in New Jersey. Ollie is pathetic at fatherhood. He immerses himself in work, ignores his daughter, and hollers to his father Bart (George Carlin) to tend to her when she cries or needs a feed. Bart gets fed up and goes back to work as a street sweeper, and a chafed Ollie is forced to take his daughter to work with him on a day when he has a big press conference. Ollie arrives late and is summarily flummoxed by a diaper change and the screaming baby. He proceeds to publicly trash the very client he is meant to promote. He loses his job and is blacklisted. Head hung low, Ollie retreats back to New Jersey.

Six years later, he has joined his father in the street-sweeping business, and his happy little Gertie is attending school. New Jersey might not have the glamour of New York but it is, in its own way, quite comfortable. So Ollie is torn. He likes the life he has in New Jersey, but he misses the rush he got from his job in the city. He can't help feeling that fatherhood cheated him of the life he was meant to lead. He knows that he is meant for more than street cleaning, but whatever it is doesn't come his way. He lives in no-man's-land, unable to pick up the pieces of his emotional or professional life. He continues living in his father's home and rents porn movies instead of finding a girlfriend or wife. But he has softened towards his daughter, who is precocious and pretty and a dead ringer

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Daddy Day Care

for her mother. Gertie is sure about what she wants. She wants to stay in New Jersey, with her father, grandfather, her grandfather's friends, and a sweet young woman at the video store (Liv Tyler) who likes her father. These people make up a homey hodgepodge that Gertie calls family.

Thus the film's central conflict exposes an insurmountable chasm between New York and New Jersey, between fatherhood and manliness. New Jersey is where Ollie can nurture his family; New York is where he can be the man he wants to be. He cannot have both; being a good father necessitates a sacrifice of identity. It is not to say that either decision will make him unhappy, but that there is no compromise between the two of them that he can reach.

Like most of the films in this genre, *Jersey Girl* ends in a kind of euphoric retreat from reality. The closing scenes reveal the father figure standing at the cusp of a newer, richer, and more meaningful life, achieved through his involvement with the cute little infant he once considered abandoning. Fatherhood, the very thing the character reviled or felt uneasy about, has become an archway beyond which gleams an emotionally superior lifestyle. The family is completed, and the long-suffering child is ultimately better off with the father as primary caregiver. In an overwrought metaphor at the film's end, the father rebuilds the picket fence that the clumsy paws of testosterone-tinted maternalism had broken, and the household, though different, is whole once again.

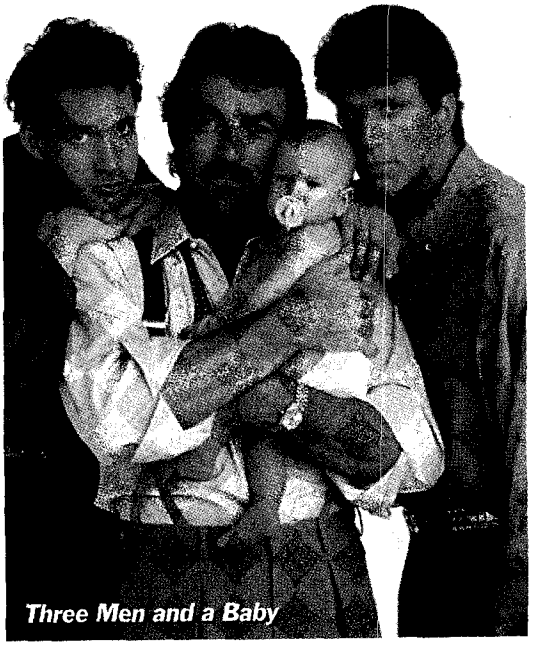
What is interesting about *Jersey Girl* and *Daddy Day Care* is the new reality they envision. Twenty years ago, when *Mr. Mom* was released, the world of male child care seemed far more dangerous. *Mr. Mom* is a film that Phyllis Schlafly could have directed. A lousy economy causes Jack Butler (Michael Keaton) to lose his job at the auto plant. When he can't find another one and his wife Caroline (Teri Garr) lands a high-paying advertising job, Jack opts to stay home and take care of the kids.

Unfortunately for Jack, his home is a house of horrors, full of gadgets chewing up what masculinity survived his pink slip. The vacuum cleaner is nicknamed "Jaws," the washing machine moves menacingly across the laundry floor, and the popcorn machine spurts kernels like a machine gun. And the role reversal opens the door for family-destroying predators: Caroline has to fend off her sleazy boss's advances, and the neighborhood hussies pounce on Jack. No wonder he wears a prison outfit for Halloween.

While *Mr. Mom* envisions domestic fatherhood as dangerous for both men and the family, *Jersey Girl* and *Daddy Day Care* propose it as a new male identity. In the past decade, there has been something of a push for American men to reclaim fatherhood. My local library is filled with books, like Popenoe's *Life Without Father*, that deplore the plague of fatherlessness in America, entreat men to find their inner papa, and give instructions on how to correct errant paternal behavior. And, to a certain degree, *Jersey Girl* is merely another sign—or symptom—of this general feeling that clearly many in America share.

But the small film is symptomatic of another movement, as well. Activist groups are pushing to change the shape of families in America and to widen the parameters of acceptability by insisting that families do not need to have a mother and a father, but can function perfectly well with a father or a mother only. And the movies are coming down firmly on the activists' side. Like *About a Boy* (2002) and *The Object of My Affection* (1998), *Jersey Girl* is a movie that valorizes the alternative family, the default nucleus of one parent, or perhaps no parent, and extended friends, that converge to make the world safe and sound for the child. We can't all be in regular families, these films seem to say, and therefore the potpourri of people that get together for a Christmas party will do as well, if not better, and one good parent is just as good as two.

Of course, the truth of it is that fathers don't need other fathers; fathers need mothers. Mothers are necessary to counterbalance Dad's masculinity and to keep him from becoming an androgynous amalgam of nurturer and disciplinarian. No matter how much we prop up fatherhood, and insist that it is the new motherhood, it is specious to assume that the role can stand alone. ♦



Three Men and a Baby

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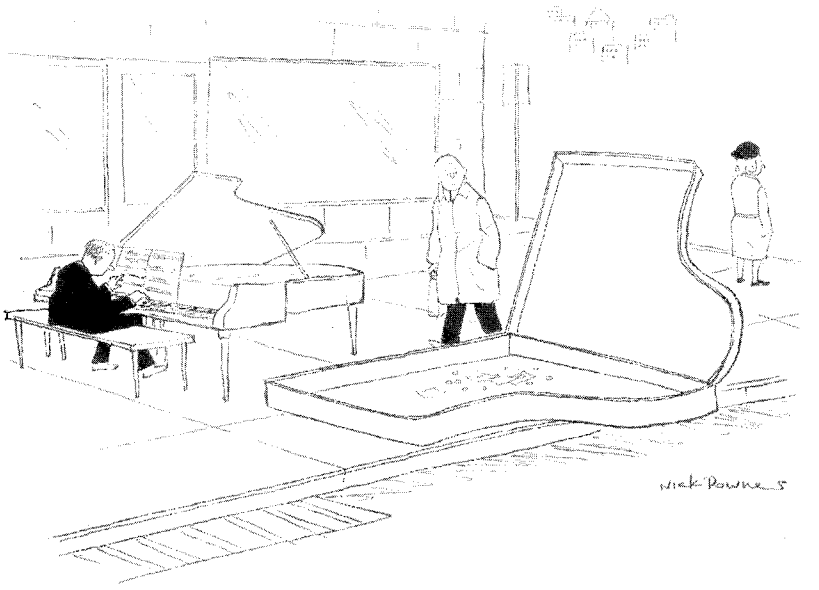
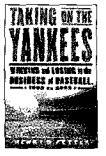


Books in Brief



Taking on the Yankees: Winning and Losing in the Business of Baseball, 1903-2003 **by Henry D. Fetter (W.W. Norton, 480 pp., $25.95).** Hating the New York Yankees is as American as apple pie. Thus Henry Fetter's book on how baseball teams succeed or fail uses a deceptive title to catch the reader's attention: Taking on the Yankees. Fetter has actually written an interesting, if rambling, study of the way baseball organizations fashion winning teams. He focuses on the Giants, Cardinals, and Dodgers in their dealings with the Yankee challenge. This enables him to give a fascinating overview of baseball's often bizarre organizational history.

Yankee greatness began with the single-minded determination of its first owner, Colonel Jacob Ruppert. The George Steinbrenner of his day, Ruppert wanted to win, and he wasn't afraid to spend money to do so. Fetter notes that in the 1920s, the Yankees recorded a profit of $3.5 million and paid no dividends. Ruppert's idea of a good game was simple: Yankees score eight runs in the first inning and then slowly pull away. There is no disputing the Yankee formula: Put together a good management team—general managers like Ed Barrow and George Weiss, and managers like Miller Huggins, Casey Stengel, and Joe Torre—give them players they need, and sit back to watch the pennants role in.

The Cardinals under Branch Rickey, baseball's one true intellectual, tried a different approach, the farm system. Fetter argues that this didn't really work and attributes the success of the Cardinals to Rickey's instinctive baseball judgment, not his farm system. Still the farm system idea was co-opted by the Yankees in the 1940s as a way of providing a steady supply of talent such as Yogi Berra, Whitey Ford, and Mickey Mantle to the parent club.

The chapters on the Giants and the Dodgers are interesting but not really appropriate to Fetter's argument. The Giants spent money unwisely, providing stockholders with dividends instead of reinvesting in the team, and thus fell behind the Yankees. The Dodgers first used Rickey's farm system to build up their organization and then were the first team to tap into the African-American talent pool when Rickey signed Jackie Robinson. This enabled the Dodgers to dominate the National League for twenty years from the late 1940s until the early 1970s. Fetter rejects the revisionist view of Walter O'Malley and argues that O'Malley was, in fact, the villain, not the victim, of political wheeling and dealing in New York before he moved to Los Angeles.

Taking on the Yankees, despite some minor flaws, is insightful about the institutional development of baseball—a worthy addition to any library of good baseball books.

—John P. Rossi

Presidential Leadership: Rating the Best and the Worst in the White House, **edited by James Taranto and Leonard Leo (Free Press, 304 pp., $26).** Each of the essays in *Presidential Leadership* gives a concise, measured look at how our presidents shaped the executive branch, for good or ill. The book provides forgotten insights such as Roosevelt's 1932 whistle-stop in Pittsburgh, in which he promised "that if elected he would slash federal expenditures 25 percent and balance the budget." (He later denied he had ever made the speech.)

Unsurprisingly, readers will come away with renewed love for Washington and Lincoln. Yet *Presidential Leadership* also demands from us deeper respect for all the men who have held the title of chief executive. As William J. Bennett writes in his foreword, "Whatever is said of the worst of them, it must also be remembered that, at the very least, they submitted themselves—and their character—to public scrutiny and public service."

—Nicole Topham

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

We've recently updated our FAQs. Please check to see if any of your questions are listed below:

I donated my car to a charity that promotes reforestation in the Pacific Northwest. Recently, though, I've learned that about 70 percent of the charity's revenues are being redirected to terrorist groups in Malaysia. If I telephone Kuala Lumpur, is that part of my long-distance bill deductible?

They say in life only two things are certain. However, I just saw a *Twilight Zone* episode where a guy sells his soul in order to live forever, and then he commits murder, but instead of the death penalty he gets life in prison. So, in his case, wouldn't nothing be certain?

Somebody told me you can deduct for passive activity loss and said (in a kind of smirky way, I thought) I was a prime candidate. But your website makes it look like it's just for rental real estate. Please let me know, since I am missing *Judge Judy* to write this.

My accountant was talking about "those jerks at the IRS." This wasn't the first time. Do you want his name?

I quote from your website: "This section is packed with the information you need to operate your business." So how come I've been in business seven years without selling one Frankenferret™?

Somebody from the IRS called and told me I was employing an abusive tax shelter. In fact, though, I never found the shelter to be anything but pleasant. On the other hand, I can't say the same for this gentleman from your agency. What say you to that?

For the 1040-EZ form, what does the EZ stand for?

I have heard that Al Capone was cleared on murder and racketeering, but that he was finally imprisoned for tax evasion. I was recently investigated for tax evasion and cleared. Does that mean I might later go to jail for murder and racketeering?

My business has lost money for 23 years in a row. Should I start a magazine?

the weekly Standard

April 26, 2004

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No Child Left Behind: [illegible] Mandate

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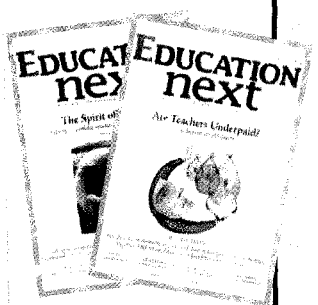

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It has been said, more than [illegible] the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act is a mandate that the federal government has failed to fund. Not true. The law is neither unfunded nor, with one exception, much of a mandate.

On the funding side, it costs about twenty dollars to test a student, the only thing NCLB requires all schools to do. Meanwhile, federal dollars have risen steadily since the law's passage; the average district now receives three hundred dollars more per pupil from Washington than it did in 2000.

Other than this test requirement, schools are asked only to show adequate yearly progress toward state- (not federal-) determined goals.

What are the consequences of failing to make this progress? Not much. If a school fails for two years running, the only requirement is to let its students transfer to one of the district's nonfailing schools.

In most cases, inner-city children are not given access to a suburban school, a private school, or a charter school outside the district's boundaries.

Roughly 20 percent of students in big cities currently attend "failing" schools, a percentage certain to rise as the "adequate yearly progress" rule becomes increasingly stringent. Unless schools improve quickly—or states ease their academic standards—most big-city schools are in danger of being defined as failing. With every school so designated, the choice mandate vanishes.

The general demand for choice remains high. Surveys show that over a fifth of the parents in failing schools would like to consider an alternative. But in practice less than 1 percent of all students in failing schools are switching schools. Some hurdles, such as transportation costs, are practical. But many school districts are actively discouraging parents when they apply. As one Worcester, Massachusetts, official put it, "the feds told us we had to offer a choice, not the parents' choice, but a choice."

After three years, failing schools must also give students tutoring or other extra services. For this, the federal government is providing more than enough funds to pay current costs—and still more money is on its way. The original idea was to bring new providers into education to supplement the work of failed schools, but in many districts the majority of these services are being provided by the district itself.

If schools fail five years in a row, they are to be "reconstituted." Will this mandate, at least, have a bite? Perhaps, but early returns suggest that it has more the teeth of a minnow than of a shark.

Still, there remains one potent mandate. Because of the NCLB testing requirement, parents and taxpayers are being told, more clearly than ever, how much students are learning at school. The feds are making school officials and union leaders squirm under the bright light of continuously available information about school performance. What's so bad about that?

—Paul E. Peterson

Paul E. Peterson is the Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Government, Harvard University; senior fellow, Hoover Institution; and member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

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